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DELANE OF "THE TIMES"

Emery Walker Ltd. Photographer

JOHN THADEUS DELANE

From a painting in the National Portrait Gallery by H. A. G. Schiött

LONDON
STABLE & COMPANY LTD

MAKERS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY
Edited by BASIL WILLIAMS

DELANE

OF

The Times

BY

SIR EDWARD COOK

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GENERAL EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE aim of this series, *Makers of the Nineteenth Century*, of which Sir Edward Cook's "Delane of *The Times*" is the first volume to appear, is to interpret the age which immediately preceded ours through the lives of those who had the chief influence upon it. It is always difficult to set arbitrary limits to an age, but for practical purposes the period chosen for this series is roughly from the year 1830, when the work of the French Revolution was almost accomplished, till the death of Queen Victoria in 1902. Our ambition is to embrace in the series the lives of all those eminent men and women whose chief work was performed during those seventy years.

If, when the series is completed, the subjects of the different biographies have been well chosen and treated as sympathetically as Sir Edward Cook has treated Delane, I believe the task of the future Carlyle or Macaulay, who undertakes to give a vivid representation of the age, to explain its main tendencies and to describe it as a living corporation, will be lightened. On the other hand, this series will not, perhaps, help a future Buckle, who treats all history as a science of so exact a nature that he is prepared to predict the future from the past. For these volumes will show, as does all good biography, how great a force in the world is that intangible quality of individuality, unaccountable to exact science, except possibly by principles of atavism so

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remote that they become valueless. Our appeal will be rather to those who believe that in every human being there is some divine, original spark, unforeseen and incalculable beforehand, an originality, which makes the world a state of progress and living change instead of a mere humdrum state of scientific exactitude. The man of genius or of special force is the man who has most of this originality and who most profoundly affects his own and succeeding ages. Some of these men of genius and force are predominantly bad, some predominantly good, and in all there is a mixture: hence all our eminent men will not be heroes and some will have made the world worse than it would have been without them. But even the most original men are in turn influenced by the world upon which they act, and on the whole the world is good and accepts the influence of good more readily than of bad. Thus, although there will be some described in these volumes who have harmed the world by their force and originality, theirs has been the harder task, and they have not been able appreciably to modify the impetus towards a better, richer, and happier existence encouraged by the majority of the century's great men.

It may be said that it is as yet too early to treat dispassionately and from the proper perspective men and women who worked so near to our own age. Dispassionately—No: indeed, no good biography or history can be written dispassionately, for the man who does not feel the events or the characters he describes—to whatever age they may belong—as living enough for him to hate or love them has never written history that will live. Even Gibbon's affectation of detachment is a transparent mask. The

question of a proper perspective is more difficult. It is probably true that the age from 1830 to 1902 is too near for us yet to be able to give a valuable judgment upon it as a whole. This is no doubt also true of some of the men who made the age. Against that must be put the fact that many of us can still describe from our own or our friends' experience what some of these great men meant to those who first heard their message. We still have among us those who remember their first thrill of enthusiasm when Swinburne or Browning, Darwin or Meredith dawned upon their horizon and the horizon of the world, or when they began to realize the promise offered to mankind by a Lister, a Mazzini or a Lincoln. It is well to crystallize these memories before they have utterly vanished. Again, some of those whose lives will appear in this series are great only because of their influence on their generation; their influence will have been absorbed into the world's common life, but their actual words or actions will mean little to succeeding generations. To the present age their records are of importance and to the historian of the nineteenth century they are indispensable.

This series, *Makers of the Nineteenth Century*, is thus designed as a complete whole, or rather microcosm of the age which it covers. It may prove that the scheme is too ambitious and will have to be curtailed. But at least every biography which appears will be complete in itself, as an account of some nineteenth century man's life and a judgment of his influence on that phase of thought or activity of the age in which he was pre-eminent. Within certain very wide limits each writer in the series, chosen because of his special knowledge of the subject, will have complete indepen-

dence in the form of his presentation and in his judgments. No consistent or systematic view of life is laid down beforehand; and no doubt the volume on Herbert Spencer, who lived peaceably in his boarding-house, will give a curiously different impression of the age to that on Bismarck, who altered the face of Europe, or that on Delane, whose very breath of life was the social world he loved and adorned. It will be for the future historian to gather together these varying impressions and out of them to mould the variegated image of a restless, anxious, inquiring, and greatly performing nineteenth century.

BASIL WILLIAMS.

CHELSEA,
June 30th, 1915.

PREFACE

THE range of possible subjects offered by a study of a man who edited *The Times* for thirty-six years is so vast that a few words seem desirable about the limits of this little book. The best part of the life-work of a conscientious and indefatigable editor, such as was Delane, is contained in the files of the paper which he edited. A complete study of *The Times* of Delane would require a history of English journalism during a large part of the last century and involve also all the political, and much of the social, history of those thirty-six years. And, again, since Delane lived in the great world, as well as in the office of *The Times*, two substantial volumes were not found too large by a biographer who combined with notice of the editor's official career a record of his personal doings.

This book, however, is neither a history of *The Times* newspaper, nor a chronicle of European affairs during the years of Delane's editorship, nor yet, in the ordinary sense, a biography of him. It partakes, in some measure, of all those characters; but though this is a necessity of the case, the measure is strictly limited. It is impossible to make any study of the life and work of a serious journalist without touching both on the history of his journal and on the public events of his time. Of his comings and goings it is also necessary to say something. But in the present volume all these things have admitted of curtailment and selection, in subordination to its essential scope.

My purpose has been to make a study of Delane as editor of *The Times*, and in that capacity as one of the "Makers of the Nineteenth Century." Of that century *The Times* newspaper was a characteristic product and in it Delane was the most prominent of journalists. I have sought to show his methods and his conception of journalism, and to explain and measure his influence. Events of his time are recorded, journalistic developments are discussed, and biographical details are given, only as they serve to illustrate the character, the methods, and the power of the editor.

The principal authority for any study of Delane (next to the columns of *The Times* itself) is the "Life and Correspondence" by his nephew, Mr. Arthur Irwin Dasent. To Mr. Dasent I am greatly indebted for permission, most kindly given, to quote largely from his valuable work. I am similarly indebted to the Dean of Canterbury (Dr. Wace), whose monograph is of peculiar interest as embodying the personal impressions and recollections of one of the most trusted members of Delane's staff. For the other literary sources upon which I have drawn the reader is referred to the Bibliography (p. 302). Mr. John Walter has kindly favoured me with some information about his grandfather, who was the principal proprietor of *The Times* during thirty years of Delane's editorship.

The greater part of this book had been written a year ago; its completion has been delayed by the pressure of other occupations.

E. T. C.

June 30th, 1915.

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DELANE OF "THE TIMES"

CHAPTER I

"THE TIMES" BEFORE DELANE—HIS EARLY YEARS (1817-1841).

"No power in England is more felt, more feared, or more obeyed. What you read in the morning in *The Times*, you shall hear in the evening in all society. It has ears everywhere, and its information is earliest, completest, and surest. It has risen year by year, and victory by victory."—EMERSON.

DELANE of *The Times* was one of the great personages of the Victorian era. When, after thirty-five years, he was about to retire from his post, the coming event was spoken of, among those behind the scenes, in the tone which men apply to the passing of the mighty ones of the earth or to the close of some memorable epoch.[1] He was a man of marked abilities, which doubtless would have won distinction in any walk of life, and he was possessed of gifts which secured for him a high place in English society. But it was as Delane of *The Times* that he was famous and powerful. "I may or may not live a few months," he wrote from *The Times* office on the eve of retirement, "but my real life ends here, all that was worth having of it has been devoted to the paper."[2] *The Times*

[1] See Davidson's "Life of Archbishop Tait," ii., 320. The passage is quoted below, p. 240, at the head of Chapter IX.

[2] *Dasent*, ii., 335.

was as easily first among newapapers as was Delane among journalists. It is still a powerful newspaper, but the conditions were then so different that no idea of the importance of *The Times* in the greater part of the nineteenth century can be gathered from the facts of to-day. *The Times* was then not so much first as sole and supreme. During one of his frequent visits to Paris Delane was presented by his friend, Lord Houghton, to the Queen of Holland. She spoke of him, to someone in his presence, as "Le quatrième, pouvoir de l'état britannique." Then she asked him "Combien d'abonnés il pourrait avoir ?" Lord Houghton thought it rather an awkard question; but the editor, and his circulation, rose to the occasion, and he answered promptly, "Un million, madame."[1] As a matter of mere numbers, the circulation of *The Times* in those days would now be considered ridiculously small; but these things are relative, and compared with that of other newspapers its circulation was very large.[2] The newspaper stamp duty was heavy; the paper duties were still in force. The fivepenny *Times* held the field. Cobden calculated that until the duties were abolished, and the penny papers came into being, four-fifths of the whole daily newspaper circulation in this country issued from *The Times* press.[3] A newspaper may, however, have "the largest circulation" and yet a small influence; but here, again, the conditions of the age gave to *The Times* an easy pre-eminence. It was an age of restricted franchise, and of little general education.

[1] *Reid*, ii., 185.

[2] In 1852 the normal daily circulation of *The Times* was 40,000; of the *Morning Advertiser*, 7,000; of the *Daily News*, 3,500; of the *Morning Post*, 3,000.

[3] Morley's "Cobden," ii., 426.

The governing classes read *The Times*. Its news services and the ability of its writers made it a great educator, and gave it peculiar influence as the representative, or the guide, of public opinion. Its representative position, somewhat misunderstood in countries unfamiliar with a free Press, enhanced its prestige, and in foreign countries *The Times* counted for more than all the rest of the British Press together.[1]

The great days of *The Times*, its national influence, its European reputation, did not begin with Delane; and of one of his forerunners the deeds have been celebrated by a prose poet. In his "Life of John Sterling" Carlyle devoted some pages to his friend's father, Edward Sterling, the "Magus of *The Times*," who "thundered through it to the shaking of the spheres."[2] "The emphatic, big-voiced, always influential and often strongly unreasonable *Times* newspaper was the express emblem of Edward Sterling. And let us assert withal that his and its influence, in those days, was not ill-grounded but rather well; that the loud manifold unreason, often enough vituperated and groaned over, was of the surface mostly; that his conclusions, unreasonable, partial, hasty as they might at first be, gravitated irresistibly towards the right; in virtue of which grand quality indeed, the root of all good insight in man, his *Times* oratory found acceptance, and influential audience, amid the loud whirl of an England itself logically very stupid and wise chiefly by instinct." A grand testimonial! But though the pen was often that of the

[1] For a case in point, see below, p. 132.

[2] It was an article by Edward Sterling himself that gave to *The Times* its *sobriquet* of the "Thunderer." The article began "We thundered forth the other day on the subject of," etc.

leader-writer, Edward Sterling, the policy was directed by the editor. It was Thomas Barnes, editor of *The Times* from 1817 to 1841, who placed the paper in its proud position. In gifts, in habits, in methods Barnes was singularly unlike Delane. He mixed little in society, whereas Delane lived and moved in it. "Barnes," said his friend Leigh Hunt, "might have made himself a name in wit and literature, had he cared much for anything beyond his glass of wine and his Fielding." Delane's interests, on the other hand, were mainly political; his relaxations were in the field or the covert. And, again, whereas Delane wrote very little, the ability of Barnes's own articles was a principal feature in *The Times* of his day. There are diversities of gifts and methods in editors, it seems, which may equally lead to success. To the success which *The Times* attained under the rule of Barnes, and to the power which he wielded, the memoirs of those days bear frequent testimony. Sir John Le Marchant was once dining with Barnes, when an urgent visitor was shown into an adjoining room. It was Lord Durham, who had come on behalf of the King of the Belgians. King Leopold had been much annoyed by some article in *The Times*, and Lord Durham entreated Barnes to put in another of a contrary and healing kind. "As Le Marchant said, Here was the proudest man in England come to solicit the editor of a newspaper for a crowned head."[1] In February, 1833, the Government of Lord Grey had placed an important Bill before Parliament. Ministers assumed a high tone. Then an article of reproof and admonition appeared in *The Times*. It "made a great sensation," and the quidnuncs began to wonder

[1] *Greville*, 1837-1852, iii., 75.

whether after all the Government were safe. "It is no small homage to the power of the Press," wrote the diarist, "that an article like this makes as much noise as the declaration of a powerful Minister or a leader of Opposition could do in either House of Parliament." [1] It was indeed as with a powerful Minister or a leader of Opposition that men dealt with Barnes. In later chapters we shall hear of many remarkable negotiations in which Delane was a party, but hardly one of these was so striking as a curious episode in which Barnes was concerned in 1834. The political world had been thrown into confusion and excitement by the abrupt dismissal of Lord Melbourne. The King then sent for Sir Robert Peel, but he was in Rome, and in the meanwhile the Duke of Wellington undertook to carry on the King's Government. His right-hand man was Lord Lyndhurst, the Lord Chancellor, who deemed a friendly attitude on the part of *The Times* essential to the life of the embryo Government. Intermediaries were appointed both by the Duke and by the Chancellor to open the question. Barnes was stiff, and was not to be fobbed off with merely vague declarations of policy. The terms must be reduced to writing. The Chancellor "was evidently a little alarmed, so great and dangerous a potentate is the wielder of the thunders of the Press." The Duke then wrote a note and the Chancellor a longer paper. These were read to Barnes, who was graciously pleased to accept the assurances as satisfactory to him. In spite of some waverings, Barnes was a stout Liberal, and the pledges which he required as the price of his support were "no mutilation of the Reform Bill, the adoption of those measures of

[1] *Greville*, ii., 362 (February 27, 1833).

reform which had been already sanctioned by votes of the House of Commons last session with regard to Church and corporations, and no change in our foreign policy." The treaty between the high contracting parties was ratified at a dinner given to Barnes by the Lord Chancellor. As there were many guests, the thing came to be talked about and caused some uproar in the inner circles of high politics. Some thought that Ministers had been too condescending; but Lord Lyndhurst said, "Why Barnes is the most powerful man in the country."[1] All this was in November. Sir Robert Peel arrived post-haste from the Duchess of Torlonia's ball in December; his Ministry was short-lived, and by April, 1835, he was out.

"Having this day" (he wrote privately to the editor of *The Times* on April 18) "delivered into the hands of the King the seals of office, I can, without any imputation of an interested motive, or any impediment from scrupulous feelings of delicacy, express my deep sense of the powerful support which the Government over which I had the honour to preside received from *The Times* newspaper. If I do not offer the expressions of personal gratitude, it is because I feel that such expressions would do injustice to the character of a support which was given exclusively on the highest and most independent grounds of public principle. I can say this with perfect truth, as I am addressing one whose person even is unknown to me, and who during my tenure of power studiously avoided every species of intercourse which could throw a suspicion upon the motives by which he was actuated. I should, however, be doing injustice to

[1] *Greville*, iii., 155—169.

my own feelings if I were to retire from office without one word of acknowledgement; without at least assuring you of the admiration with which I witnessed, during the arduous contest in which I was engaged, the daily exhibition of that extraordinary ability to which I was indebted for a support, the more valuable because it was an impartial and discriminating support." [1] Such was the power of *The Times*, and such the repute of its editor, in the days of Barnes.

The death of Lord Lyndhurst's "most powerful man in the country" was a great event. "Mr. Barnes died yesterday morning suddenly" (wrote Greville: May 8, 1841), "after having suffered an operation. His death is an incalculable loss to *The Times*, of which he was the principal editor and director; and his talents, good sense, and numerous connexions gave him a preponderating influence in the affairs of the paper. The vast power exercised by *The Times* renders this a most important event, and it will be curious to see in what hands the regulating and directing power will hereafter be placed." The choice of Mr. Walter, the chief proprietor, fell upon the junior member of his staff, a young man who had left Oxford only a year before and had since been employed in various subordinate capacities in the office of *The Times*. This young man, the subject of the present volume, wielded the thunders of *The Times* for thirty-six years. The paper which had been great under Barnes became greater still under his successor. Delane did not make *The Times*, but

[1] Carlyle's "Sterling," part iii., chap. 5. The editor's answer, drafted by Edward Sterling, "with due loftiness and diplomatic gravity," may be read in the same place.

he did something quite as remarkable. The reputation which had been gained in an era of virtual monopoly was by him maintained and enhanced in changing conditions and against keen competition.

John Thadeus Delane, who was thus appointed at the age of twenty-three to one of the most important and responsible posts in the country, was born on October 11, 1817. The Delanys were originally settled in Queen's County, but the name was changed to Delane when the family migrated to England. John Delane's grandfather was sergeant-at-arms to George III.; his father, William Frederick Augustus Delane, was a barrister, and married a niece of Colonel Babington, of the 14th Light Dragoons. John, the second son, was born in South Molton Street, London, and brought up at his father's country house at Easthampstead, Berkshire. There were in all four sons and five daughters. John's younger brothers became soldiers, and he himself was always strongly interested in military affairs. After being at private schools, he was for two years (1833 to 1835) at King's College, London, and afterwards went to a private tutor's at Faringdon, in Berkshire. In October, 1836, he matriculated at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, where his tutor was the vice-principal, Dr. Jacobson, to whom Delane was afterwards able to render service by commending him to Ministers successively for the Regius Professorship of Divinity and for the see of Chester. Delane did not read hard, but rode hard. His feats of endurance as a horseman were famous. "Delane's leave," said his tutor, "is sometimes French leave, but then we must remember that he like the centaurs of old is part and parcel of his

horse." [1] It was a true judgment. All his life he was an eager rider; he was a familiar figure in the Row and in the hunting-field, and never walked or drove anywhere or at any time if he could possibly ride. He was not erudite; but he had the knack of mastering a task speedily, and was quick in the uptake: indispensable qualifications for a successful journalist. A passion for horses cannot be included in that list, but in Delane's case was one of the causes that led him into journalism. His father made him but a small allowance at Oxford; and whilst he was an undergraduate, if not indeed almost a freshman, his desire to provide fitting means for stable expenses made him toil as a journalist, in which sort he achieved, it has been said, "more success of the kind he sought than, except perhaps in America, had ever been compassed before by any lad under age." [2] It is possible that Delane at this time contributed articles to *The Times* among other papers. It is certain that Mr. Walter, the chief proprietor, already had his eye upon the lad. Delane's father and Mr. Walter were neighbours in the country, and both the father and John used to assist Mr. Walter in his election contests. He had formed a high opinion of the boy's character and abilities, and marked him down for the service of the paper. The father was appointed financial manager, and the son's education was directed, by Mr. Walter's friendly interest, with a view to his subsequent employment on the staff of *The Times*. Young Delane took his degree in 1839, and in the following year (July, 1840) entered the office of

[1] *Macmillan*, January, 1880.

[2] So says Kinglake ("Crimea," vii., 215), who, as Delane's travelling companion in the East, doubtless heard from him many particulars of his early life.

The Times. He shared a lodging at this time in St. James's Square with John Blackwood, the publisher; he worked hard in whatever journalistic duties were entrusted to him; and in particular he attended the Parliamentary debates, summarising the speeches. He had other interests also; he read some law, and found time to walk the hospitals as well.[1] His apprenticeship on *The Times* must have revealed great readiness, judgment and resource; for when Barnes died Mr. Walter seems to have felt no hesitation about the succession. The young man was equally devoid of qualms. "By Jove, John," said Delane, rushing in to his friend's room in the highest spirits, "what do you think has happened? I am editor of *The Times!*" "Florid, bright-eyed, brimming with zeal, a man of great ardour and eagerness, passionately imbued with the spirit of journalism,"[2] young Delane entered upon the responsibilities of his post with perfect serenity and self-confidence. In later years he was asked whether he had felt no tremors. "Not a bit," was the reply; "what I dislike about you young men of the present day is that you all shrink from responsibility."

[1] *Wace*, p. 6.
[2] *Kinglake*, vii., 214.
[3] *Sband*, p. 192.

CHAPTER II

FIRST YEARS OF EDITORSHIP—PEEL AND ABERDEEN (1841-1846).

"In the very furnace-hissing of events."—GEORGE MEREDITH.

WHEN a new editor is installed he generally bethinks himself of how he can strengthen his staff and sources of information; and in this task he is assisted, or impeded, as the case may be, by many suggestions. At any rate he is besieged, for there is always at such times a crowd of correspondents with wares to bring to market or with information to offer. The applicants are by no means only professional journalists or unappreciated writers who think that with a new man at the head their time may at last have come. There are many with axes to grind, with logs to roll. There are others who volunteer their confidences from less interested motives. They are fond of the latest news for its own sake; they like to receive it and to impart; it is something, they feel, to have an editor's ear; it is pleasant to them to pull wires, or to think that they are doing so. Such persons, if they are honourable and (except as aforesaid) disinterested, are often among the best friends and allies that an editor can have; but if he is wise, while making use of such help at second hand, he will prefer, wherever it is possible, to repair to the fountain-head; and if he is responsible and influential, such possibilities often occur. It was so, in all these respects, with

Delane in the years that immediately followed his appointment to the editorship of *The Times*.

The staff which Delane took over from his predecessor was strong and competent, though the original thunderer—Edward Sterling—had then ceased to write. Henry Reeve, afterwards editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, had joined the staff in 1840, and he continued to serve the paper under Delane until 1855, chiefly as a writer of articles on foreign politics. Delane strengthened his staff by enlisting several recruits. He persuaded Roundell Palmer, whom he had known at Oxford, to contribute articles on ecclesiastical subjects (1841-1843). In 1844 Delane secured the services of the Rev. Thomas Mozley, Newman's brother-in-law, as an almost daily leader-writer. It was Mozley who used a striking metaphor to describe his trade. "To write a leading article," he said, "may take only from two hours to two hours and a half, but then all the rest of your time you are a crouching tiger, waiting, waiting, to make your spring." [1] Polemical theology is not bad training, it may be supposed, for the crouching tigers in the political arena. W. H. Russell, who was destined to add some of the most brilliant chapters to the history of the paper, joined the staff in 1842, and Delane soon formed a very high opinion of his talents. George William Dasent, the Scandinavian scholar, who was an Oxford friend, joined Delane as assistant-editor in 1845, married his sister Mary in the following year, and remained in the service of the paper till 1870.[2] Dasent's personal acquaintance with Bunsen widened Delane's range of information. We shall hear of

[1] *Kinglake*, vii., 219.

[2] Dasent was succeeded, as assistant-editor, by Mr. William Stebbing.

other writers enlisted by Delane[1]; but these were his principal recruits in the early years.

Of the non-professional allies, described above, the most useful to Delane, as a young man with his way to find and friends still to be made, was Charles Greville, the diarist and Clerk of the Privy Council. He first opened communications under a thin guise of anonymity, enclosing materials for an article which, as it contained uncorroborated attacks on public men, the young editor had the good sense not to use. This opening incident was typical. Greville and Delane became good friends, and each was useful to the other; but Greville often inveighed against an editor who insisted on taking his own line, and Delane was always on his guard. In later years it was sometimes suggested that Greville was the medium through which official secrets found their way into *The Times*, and Lord Granville, as Greville's intimate friend, was accused of talking too freely to him. In defence Lord Granville explained that on the contrary he had been scrupulously reticent, knowing as he did Greville's "love of political gossip and his habit of constantly receiving Delane and Reeve, who of course come to pick up what they can." Greville's "position as to *The Times*," Lord Granville added, "has been much misrepresented. He has no sort of influence over the general conduct of the paper. He does not write in it, excepting such letters as are signed 'Carolus' or 'C.C.G.,' which he openly avows, and I believe him to be too honourable knowingly and intentionally to afford improper information to the

[1] Of the later recruits, none was valued more highly by Delane than Dr. Wace (afterwards Dean of Canterbury), who wrote for the paper from 1863 to 1880.

writers in that paper."[1] At the outset, however, Greville's sagacious advice and friendly offices were most valuable to Delane. To Greville he owed, said Mr. Reeve,[2] his "first introductions to political society, of which he made so excellent use, and where he gradually acquired the esteem of men of all parties and a position which no editor of a newspaper had before enjoyed." All that is doubtless true; yet it was rather as editor of *The Times*, and an editor who was showing himself worthy of the post, than as the *protégé* of Greville, that Delane acquired his position. The opportunity and the man did not fail each other.

In his handling of public topics Delane introduced into the paper a quieter tone than had been usual in the days of Edward Sterling. *The Times* under Delane, said Sir James Graham, "saved the English language." "Have you not remarked," wrote a competent observer in 1843, "how much the style of *The Times* is changed now from what it was? One no longer sees those fierce declamations which caused Stoddart to get the name of Doctor Slop and the paper the title of the Thunderer. It has become mild, argumentative and discriminating." It was the opinion of Robinson, who was well qualified to give one, that the paper in the first years of Delane's editorship was "better than it had ever been."[3]

The lowering of the key did not diminish the paper's authority. Of the influence of *The Times* in foreign countries a curious illustration was given one day in December, 1843, at the Court of the Tuileries. An English man of letters was presented to the King.

[1] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 92.
[2] In a note to the "Greville Journals," May 8, 1841.
[3] "Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson," 3rd ed., ii., 251.

"I regret, Mr. Reeve," said Louis Philippe, "that I cannot more fully express in this place the obligation which I feel for the service you have done us." The English circle at the French Court looked on with surprise, we are told, and perhaps also with some bewilderment, when this speech was made. But those behind the scenes well understood. The service for which Louis Philippe felt himself to be under so great an obligation was a couple of articles in *The Times* which Reeve had been prompted to write by his friend M. Guizot and in which the pretensions and proceedings of Henri Comte de Chambord, Duc de Bordeaux, then an exile in London, were exposed and ridiculed.[1] Greville, who knew how the philippic had been planned and executed, was "amused" to see the sensation which one or other of the articles had made both in England and in France. "Every French newspaper copied it *in extenso*, and, considering the prodigious number of people who take their opinions ready made from *The Times*, there is little doubt that it will put an extinguisher upon him here."[2]

When a foreign sovereign was thus willing publicly to give thanks for the support of *The Times*, it is the easier to understand the anxiety of successive Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs to keep in personal touch with its editor. Very soon after his appointment Delane made the acquaintance of Lord Aberdeen. The acquaintance ripened into a frienship which lasted till the Minister's death, which was hardly impaired by Delane's many disagreements in late years with Lord Aberdeen's views, and which resulted in frequent communications between them alike when

[1] Leading articles, December 7, 13, 1843.
[2] *Greville*, 1837—1852, ii., 216.

the Minister was in and when he was out of office. At the first when Delane was very young and new to his post Lord Aberdeen's counsel and information must have been as dominant as they were useful. "I had a very long interview with Lord Aberdeen to-day," he wrote to Reeve (November 18, 1842), "principally on the commercial treaty between France and Belgium, which I should wish you to make the subject of three or four more articles." [1]

Lord Aberdeen was a peace Minister, and the prime object of his conduct of the Foreign Office during Peel's second Administration (1841-1846) was the establishment of a cordial and intimate understanding with the French Government. Queen Victoria was of like mind, and in the autumn of 1843 she and the Prince Consort paid a visit to King Louis Philippe at the Château d'Eu, afterwards visiting her uncle, the King of the Belgians, at Ostend. The Queen was accompanied by Lord Aberdeen, who discussed with the King's Minister, M. Guizot, many questions—including that of the Spanish Marriages which afterwards led to serious misunderstanding. The question is now dead, but it excited a prodigious interest at the time, and Greville was on the alert to note the agreement arrived at between the two Ministers. He heard the news from Delane, for Lord Aberdeen, after returning to London from the Château d'Eu and before starting again for Ostend, had sent for the editor and told him all—and more, it seems, than he cared to repeat to Greville—of what had passed. Greville was a little surprised. "Notwithstanding the hostile and offensive tone which *The Times* has adopted towards the Government generally, par-

[1] *Laughton*, i., 158.

ticularly Peel and Graham, this formidable paper is in a sort of alliance with the Foreign Office, and the communications between Lord Aberdeen and Delane are regular and frequent." [1]

The same allegation of an alliance between the Foreign Office and *The Times*, though the paper was hostile to the Government, has been made in our own day.[2] The Secretary of State denied that in the particular matter then alleged there was any alliance whatever; and if in any other matters it may still exist, with *The Times* or any other paper, it is, I do not doubt, what the alliance of 1843 assuredly was, "a sort of alliance" only. The Foreign Office may give information, but in this country it cannot—in normal circumstances—dictate opinions. At any rate, Delane's alliance with Lord Aberdeen in no way tied the editor's hands; and though he gave a general support to what at the time was the foreign policy of his country, he felt himself free, and he used the freedom unsparingly, to take a line of his own, no matter how tiresome it might be to those concerned exclusively in maintaining that policy. In the autumn of 1844, shortly before King Louis Philippe was to return the Queen's visit, popular animosities between France and England were revived by various incidents, of which one was the French attack on Morocco, and the bombardment of Tangier by Vice-Admiral the Prince de Joinville. "The Tangier affair," wrote Queen Victoria to her uncle, "is unfortunate, and I hope that in future poor Joinville will not be exposed to such disagreeable affairs. What *can* be done will be, to get

[1] *Greville*, 1837-1852, ii., 200.

[2] See Mr. Dillon's speech on Persia on June 17, and a reply by Sir Edward Grey on June 23, 1914 (*Hansard*, lxiii., 1198, 1625).

him justified in the eyes of the public here, but I fear that at first they will not be very charitable." Delane lent no hand in the justification. On the contrary he published some letters by eye-witnesses accusing the French Admiral and Navy of being deficient in courage. The Queen thought the letters "outrageous." [1]

The Times in the following year had a dispute of its own with the French Government—a dispute which gave occasion to Delane and Mr. Walter to display their initiative and resource. The rapidity with which *The Times* published news from the East irritated the French. The mails in those days were landed at Marseilles, and thus had to pass through Paris. *The Times* had a system of special messengers in operation between Marseilles and London, and so speedy was this service that by the time the French mails reached Paris *The Times* was already there with all the news in print. In view of this enterprise the French Government proceeded, not to expedite its own service, but to obstruct *The Times* service. The special messenger was interfered with. *The Times* thereupon decided to show what it could do without having its mails sent through France at all. With the help of Lieutenant Waghorn, the promoter of the "overland route" to India, Delane organised a *Times* express from Alexandria to London. By means of a special dromedary express from Suez and a special steamer to Trieste, *The Times* was able to beat the regular mail by fourteen days. The French Government then removed its interdict, and the former service was resumed. The cost of the demonstration had been great, but so was the journalistic credit.

In those days, it will be remembered, railway

[1] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, ii., 24.

construction in France was only beginning; even the first part of the Paris-Lyons line (as far as Chalons) was not opened till 1851. The railway mania which was raging in England enabled Delane to make another hit and to render a great service to the public. Here, again, he could not have done what he did without the support of a far-seeing proprietor, prepared to face immediate loss for future gain. From an analysis, published in *The Times*,[1] it appears that there were 1,200 projected railways, many of them competitive, asking the public for over £500,000,000 of capital. The public seemed to suppose that the paying capacity of new railways was boundless, and that the purchase of railway shares was the sure and easy road to fortune. The heads of the whole community were turned. It was the story of the South Sea bubble over again. "It is incredible," wrote Greville, "how people have been tempted to speculate; half the fine ladies have been dabbling in stocks, and men the most unlikely have not been able to refrain from gambling in shares, even I myself—though in a very small degree, for the warning voice of the Governor of the Bank has never been out of my ears." What the Governor had said was that the speculation was mad, and that there was bound to be a fearful reaction. *The Times* now came to the front; and day after day, from July, 1845, onwards, it exposed "the knaves and warned the dupes." The cost of this service to the public was great. Company advertisements are a principal source of revenue to a paper like *The Times*, and such advertisements, so far as railway schemes were concerned, were for the most part stopped in consequence of the exposure. But the

[1] In its Supplement of November 17, 1845.

loss was worth incurring even on financial grounds. The exposure added greatly to the credit of the paper. Its reputation was enhanced in the very circles where *The Times* had most to gain in popularity and prestige.

Yet another *coup* was made by Delane in the same year (1845)—a *coup* than which none is more famous in the annals of British journalism, which is connected with a decisive moment in our political history, and which has found a place, moreover, in one of the best works of a great writer. Delane's editorship of *The Times* began in "the hungry forties," when the Corn Laws were in every man's mind. The Whig Government on the eve of its fall in 1841 had declared for a fixed duty of 8*s*. the quarter in place of the sliding scale instituted in 1828 while Peel was a Minister. In 1842 he carried a measure amending his scale, with a view, on the one hand, to secure the price of wheat at a lower figure than that aimed at in the law of 1828, and, on the other, to encourage the foreign importers to send in their supplies without waiting for the total abrogation of the duty in consequence of famine prices. Peel was opposed alike to total repeal and to the Whig compromise of a low fixed duty. The Abolition League continued its agitation; but Peel's policy held its ground. *The Times* during these years took an uncertain attitude; dealing out blows at Protectionist and Free Trader alike from the vantage ground, as has been said, of one who waits for the final leap of the cat.[1] Up to the middle of 1845 there was no indication of a change of direction. Peel seemed to himself and to his opponents unmoved and impregnable. But in July there began to fall the

[1] Trevelyan's "Bright," p. 92.

rains which were to "rain away the Corn Laws." [1] In England the harvest was spoilt; in Ireland the potato crop was diseased. Peel, whose views had already been changing, watched the misery of the people with feelings of profound pity. He saw that the Corn Laws must at once be suspended; he resolved never to be a party to their reimposition. On October 31 he began to open his mind to the Cabinet; but there were differences of opinion, and no public move was made.

On December 4 *The Times* came out with the following announcement:—

"The decision of the Cabinet is no longer a secret. Parliament, it is confidently reported, is to be summoned for the first week in January; and the Royal Speech will, it is added, recommend an immediate consideration of the Corn Laws, preparatory to their total repeal. Sir Robert Peel in one House, and the Duke of Wellington in the other will, we are told, be prepared to give immediate effect to the recommendation thus conveyed. . . . It is said that the decision has been made with that unanimity which perhaps the compulsion of circumstances alone can inspire. The reported exceptions are both insignificant and doubtful."

Never in time of peace has any announcement in a newspaper caused excitement so deep and so wide as this which was penned by Delane on the night of December 3, 1845. "Glorious news," wrote John Bright; "I am almost ill with reading the announcement." [2] Protectionists were ill on the other side of the face, till they found some comfort in the contradiction of *The Times* by the rival *Standard*. "It is impossible," wrote Greville, "to describe the agitation into which all classes of persons have been thrown by

[1] *Peel Papers*, iii., 599.
[2] *Trevelyan*, p. 139.

the announcement—the doubts, hopes, and fears it has excited, and the burning curiosity to know the truth of it." [1] The quidnuncs, with Greville himself in the forefront, were in a flutter of baulked curiosity. It was impossible to be sure whether *The Times* was right or wrong; whilst of those who knew the facts, all but one or two were mystified as to the source of the announcement. The situation was like that which Disraeli had described, a year before, in the passage of "Coningsby" where Mr. Rigby gives the clearest and most convincing reasons for holding that Lord Spencer could not be dead, and next that even if he were dead the fact could not possibly be known to those who announced it. The Prime Minister was very angry at the article in *The Times*, and sent a special messenger to the Queen on the subject. One of his colleagues, the Lord President of the Council, said positively that the statement in *The Times* was not the fact, but declined to have his name used in any contradiction. Every one was anxious, perturbed, mystified, excited—every one except Delane, who remained perfectly calm and confident. To private friends who besieged him he said nothing except that what he had written he had written advisedly. Had a phrase made popular by a Prime Minister of our own day then been in every one's mouth, he would doubtless have told his friends to "wait and see." In the paper itself, he quietly repeated the substance of his original announcement, correcting its form, however, to "the heads of the Government had agreed." In this form the announcement, though not giving the whole truth, was true. One of the cardinal events in our political history had occurred,

[1] *Greville*, ii., 312.

and the first intimation of it to all except the members of the Cabinet had been given by *The Times*.

How did Delane know? What was the source of the information which caused him to write so positively on the night December 3 and to adhere so firmly—with such "impudence," said some at the time—in the teeth of vociferous contradiction? How it *might* have happened has been imagined in a famous novel. The Cabinet secret is told by a Minister to a beautiful woman. She is in need of money and half distraught. "She clasped the great news for succour. Great indeed; and known but to her of all the outer world. She was ahead of all—ahead of Mr. Tonans! The visionary figure of Mr. Tonans petrified by the great news, drinking it, and confessing her ahead of him in the race for secrets arose toweringly. She had not ever seen the editor in his den at midnight. With the rumble of his machinery about him, and fresh matter arriving and flying in to the printing-press, it must be like being in the very furnace-hissing of Events: an Olympian council held in Vulcan's smithy. Consider the bringing to the Jove there news of such magnitude as to stupefy him! He, too, who had admonished her rather sneeringly for staleness in her information." So, then, she has herself driven to Printing House Square; sends up her card, "marked *Imperative—two minutes*"; sees Mr. Tonans, who after receiving her news "dictates at a furious rate." She returns home—to consequences which do not here concern us. After a decent interval, Mr. Tonans sends her a letter with an enclosure, which she burns.

In one respect the description is true. Mr. Tonans

was petrified. An announcement, wrote Delane, "of such immeasurable importance and to the larger portion of the public so unspeakably gratifying, almost precludes the possibility of comment. No pen can keep pace with the reflections which must spontaneously crowd upon every thoughtful and sensitive mind." For the rest, there is not a word of truth in the calumnious gossip of the time,[1] and Mr. Meredith advised the readers of later editions of his

[1] The difficulty of overtaking a lie once started is illustrated by the history of this calumny. The story that *The Times* obtained its information from Mrs. Norton who had heard it from Sidney Herbert originated in contemporary gossip. It was given as probably true in Justin McCarthy's "History of our own Times" (1880). It received fresh currency from Mr. Meredith's use of it in "Diana of the Crossways" (1884-1885). Mr. Meredith made his heroine receive payment for her disclosure. That Delane had in fact received the news from Lord Aberdeen was stated in the "Greville Memoirs" (Second Part, 1885). In 1894, however, the falsehood about Mrs. Norton was revived in the "Autobiography of Sir William Gregory" (pp. 85—86, 1st ed.), who added various circumstantial embellishments, such as the price paid (£500), Sidney Herbert's confession to Peel, and Peel's words of forgiveness! Sir William named as the editor Mr. Barnes, who had died four years before 1845. Later in 1894 the fiction was again revived, in an article by Sir T. Wemyss Reid on "Cabinet Secrets" in *Cassell's Family Magazine* (December, 1894). It was contradicted in the *Westminster Gazette*, and the paragraph attracted the attention of Lord Dufferin (a kinsman of Mrs. Norton), who put himself in communication with the present writer (then editor of the *Westminster*). Sir Wemyss Reid withdrew his statement (*Westminster*, December 17, 1894), and Lady Gregory cancelled the passage in a second impression of her husband's Autobiography. In the *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1895, Mr. Henry Reeve took the occasion of a notice of George Meredith's novels to contradict the story from his own personal knowledge. Nevertheless, it presently re-appeared in the *St. James's Gazette* (December 6, 1895). Lord Dufferin contradicted it in a letter to that journal (December 11). In *The Times* of December 21, 1895, Sir Robert Meade (a kinsman of Sidney Herbert) contradicted the story once more, embodying an interview which he had on the subject with Mr. Reeve. Even this, however, did not stop the fiction, which re-appeared in the *Quarterly Review* of July, 1897 as "Mrs. Norton's betrayal of the secret communication to Barnes." Sir Robert Meade's letter is the fullest *exposé* of the matter. Lord Stanmore, in his "Memoir of Sidney Herbert" (1906, i., 62—63), written with knowledge of the Aberdeen Papers, confirmed Greville and Reeve in saying that the information was given to Delane by Lord Aberdeen. The origin of the false report, Lord Stanmore believed, was "an ambiguous utterance of Mr. Delane himself, not meant to bear any such interpretation as that given to it." If this be so, Delane cannot be held responsible for false interpretations which other persons may have placed on his fencing with their impertinent questions. He "never told" (see p. 119, below).

book that " the story of Diana of the Crossways is to be read as fiction." The way in which Mr. Tonans did in fact become possessed of the great news, though less romantic, is worth describing in some detail, for it contains matter of curious interest in a study of political journalism.

At a series of Cabinet Councils held between October 31 and November 6 Peel submitted proposals for tampering with the Corn Laws. Aberdeen, Graham, and Sidney Herbert were his only supporters. At the end of November Lord John Russell published his famous Edinburgh letter throwing over the idea of a fixed duty and advocating total abolition. He had consulted none of his colleagues of the Opposition, but under the pressure of public opinion and public distress the Whig party rallied to his lead. The question was now not so much whether the Corn Laws should be repealed, but which party should repeal them. " *The Times*—barometer of public opinion," wrote Prince Albert,[1] " became suddenly violently anti-Corn Law " ; following therein, be it noted, the line both of Peel and of Russell. It pronounced Lord John's letter to be " the final death-blow of the Corn Laws." " Opportunity," it continued, " which makes a child a match for a giant has conferred on Lord John Russell a principal share in a noble achievement. It has been left to him to dictate the terms of a great capitulation." The article went on to deplore that the Cabinet of Sir Robert Peel had not done of its own motion what it would now have to do, if at all, under compulsion from Lord John Russell. This was on November 28. Upon the appearance of the article, Lord Aberdeen, who was Peel's stoutest sup-

[1] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, ii., 57.

porter in the policy of repeal, opened communication on the subject with Delane. He told the editor that Peel was bent on repeal, but that a contest was going on in the Cabinet. He said that Peel considered Lord John's letter mischievous, but the article in *The Times* far more mischievous than the letter.[1] The opinion was natural to a harried Minister, but in the long run both the letter and the article were of service to Peel's cause. The Cabinet resumed the discussion of the Corn Laws under the whip of Lord John Russell and *The Times*. On Tuesday, December 2, Peel read a memorandum to the Cabinet explaining his intention to propose a law for the progressive reduction of protective duties if it met with the cordial and unanimous sanction of his colleagues. No decision was reached, but the Duke of Wellington promised his support, and unanimity seemed not improbable. On the following day Lord Aberdeen again sent for Delane, and gave him the information upon which the editor based the famous announcement. Nothing was bought or sold. What the information was we shall discuss presently; but whatever it was, it was deliberately given by Lord Aberdeen to Delane, and given in order that it should be used. As Delane turned to leave the Minister's room, Lord Aberdeen asked him what he meant to do with the information. "Why, publish it, of course," he replied, and Lord Aberdeen bade him good evening without demur.

Two questions arise: Why did Lord Aberdeen tell Delane? and what precisely was it that Lord Aberdeen told? The two questions are in a way interdependent, but it will be convenient to discuss them

[1] *Greville*, ii., 310.

in order. That Lord Aberdeen told Delane something and told it him for publication is certain. What Lord Aberdeen's purpose was must be matter of surmise. I have seen it suggested in print that Lord Aberdeen wanted to burn Peel's boats. This theory may at once be dismissed. Such a piece of sharp practice would be wholly foreign to Lord Aberdeen's nature. Moreover, as Lord Stanmore has pointed out, "that Sir Robert Peel was a party to the communication of Lord Aberdeen is manifest from the fact that not only was there not the slightest ruffle in their confidential intercourse, but that, close and intimate as that confidence for many years had been, it became from that time even closer and more intimate than it had been before." [1] Another theory is that Lord Aberdeen wanted the news to appear, as it did, on December 4, so that it might catch the outward American mail. "The Oregon negotiations were proceeding, and Lord Aberdeen thought that an announcement that the Corn Laws were about to be abolished would be welcome in the United States and would exercise a happy influence on pacific counsels over there." [2] It has been claimed, on insufficient grounds, that this was the explanation which Delane himself believed to be the true one; but Delane never said so, and the theory seems a little far-fetched. A simpler explanation is more likely to commend itself to those who are familiar with the necessary reserves under which Ministers communicate with editors and the large sphere which such communications leave to an editor's discretion.

[1] Stanmore's "Sidney Herbert," i., 62.
[2] H. Reeve as reported by Sir R. Meade, *The Times*, December 21, 1895.

This aspect of the case brings us to the second question. What was it that Lord Aberdeen communicated? Delane's biographer opines that Lord Aberdeen misled the editor;[1] another writer thinks it beyond doubt that Delane "to some extent misunderstood what Aberdeen really said."[2] My belief is that there was neither misleading nor misunderstanding. Peel and Aberdeen were, as Lord Stanmore says, wisely anxious for the support of *The Times*, and thought that the task before them would be made easier if that journal were to prepare the way by leading men's minds to the probability of abolition. Lord Aberdeen, on December 3, told Delane what on that day seemed likely to happen. He did not disclose in any detail the differences of opinion in the Cabinet. He gave only general statements, and left Delane to make what use he chose of such indications. Delane, who, it should be remembered, had eyes and ears in many quarters and who doubtless learnt more than Lord Aberdeen had told him, decided to make a bold stroke. Greville, and Greville's editor, Mr. Reeve, writing with the wisdom of the after event, thought that Delane was rash; that he would have done better to have said less, to have trimmed here, and hedged there. Mr. Reeve hints that if *he* had worded the announcement, and not Delane, it would have been more "skilfully expressed"; it would have been "equally effective in more guarded language." I must take leave to differ. It is not by hedging and trimming that a journalistic *coup* is made. Emerson was right when he said, "Who would care for *The Times*, if it 'surmised,' or 'dared

[1] *Dasent*, i., 51.
[2] Trevelyan's "Bright," p. 139, *n.*

to confess,' or 'ventured to predict,' etc.? No; *it is so*, and so it shall be." [1] Delane knew that Peel and Aberdeen were bent on repeal; he wished them to succeed; he wished also to make a success for his paper. He determined to run a risk by announcing as an accomplished fact what seemed to him likely to happen, and what might be made more likely by the announcement itself.

As it turned out, he was curiously wrong at the time; yet in the end, still more curiously right. On the very day on which Delane's sensational announcement appeared, there was a change for the worse in the unity of the Cabinet. On the 2nd of December Peel wrote to the Queen that "he was not without hope that there will be general concurrence," but on the 4th he had to inform her Majesty that the situation had "very materially altered." [2]

Lord Stanley and the Duke of Buccleuch declined to support abolition. On December 5 Peel resigned and on the same day Lord John Russell was sent for by the Queen.[3] The story of the great refusal by the Whigs does not belong to this book. It is enough here to say that Lord John failed to form a Government; that Peel returned to office; and that early in the ensuing year the Royal Speech recommended an immediate consideration of the Corn Laws preparatory to their total repeal. Thus, through byways he could not have foreseen, was Delane's famous

[1] "English Traits," p. 270.

[2] *Peel Papers*, ii., 238.

[3] It is curious that neither the Press nor Greville knew of Peel's resignation till five or six days after the event. "The Ministers kept that secret," wrote Greville (ii., 317), "nor did Aberdeen tell Delane the state of the case; I suppose he was afraid to tell him any more." On December 11 *The Times* announced the existence of a Ministerial crisis, and on December 12 reported Peel's resignation.

announcement made good by the event. Men forgot the points in which he had been wrong. It was remembered only that on a momentous occasion in our national history what *The Times* had first declared did in fact come to pass.

CHAPTER III

THE RUSSELL ADMINISTRATION (1846–1852).

"I asked one of its old contributors whether *The Times* had once been abler than it is now? Never, he said; these are its palmiest days."—EMERSON (1847).

"THE new Government," wrote Greville in July, 1846, "have concluded an alliance with the leviathan of the Press, *The Times*, which gives them a temperate, judicious, but very useful support." [1] The Government was that of Lord John Russell (with Lord Palmerston as Foreign Secretary), who had come into office upon Peel's defeat in June. The support of *The Times* may have been useful at the start, but it soon became lukewarm and then vanished away. There was, however, much ado about Delane's apparent alliance with the new Government. The *Morning Chronicle*, which had been in very close relations with Palmerston, was furious at finding that Government information was sent not to itself, but to *The Times*. The *Chronicle* was owned by a Whig member of Parliament; it was intolerable to a stout party man that a Whig Government should show favour to, and receive favour from, a paper which had stood in similar relations with a Tory Government. The editor of the *Chronicle*, as Greville relates, but more probably, as the Prince Consort said, its proprietor (Sir James Easthope), went to Lord John Russell to remonstrate, but obtained no satisfaction. Lord John had a

[1] *Greville*, ii., 406.

freezing manner, and was inclined to treat his political tail with scant courtesy. He "merely replied that he did not wish to have any Government paper, but could not repudiate the support of *The Times*." In view of the difficulties which he foresaw with Palmerston, and which soon became acute, Lord John was neither anxious, we may be sure, to be hugged by the Palmerstonian *Chronicle* nor averse from being on good terms with the independent *Times*. Lord John himself did nothing to cultivate friendly relations; but with some other members of the Whig Government Delane was on confidential terms. He frequently saw and corresponded with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Charles Wood; and his friendship with Lord Granville, then Vice-president of the Board of Trade, began at this time. With Lord Clarendon both Delane and Reeve were in constant touch. No inconsiderable part of Lord Clarendon's daily work seems to have consisted, both now and in later years, in seeing Delane or his subordinates or in writing letters to them. Delane's biographer says that the letters of Lord Clarendon to the editor would fill a volume.[1] In May, 1850, when Lord John Russell was planning to rid himself of Lord Palmerston and was discussing with the Queen the question of possible successors, he objected to Lord Clarendon on account of "his intimate connection with *The Times*."[2] In the Russell Administration Lord Clarendon was at first President of the Board of Trade and afterwards Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; but his communications with Delane covered the whole field of politics. In spite of the Prime Minister's aloofness, Delane had

[1] *Dasent*, i., 63.
[2] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, ii., 289.

thus many links with the Government, but even at the start he showed his independence. "They got *The Times* over," wrote the Prince Consort, "by giving it exclusive information, but the wicked paper added immediately a furious attack upon Sir John Hobhouse,[1] which alarmed them so much that they sent to Sir John, sounding him whether he would be hereafter prepared to relinquish the Board of Control. Sir John Easthope complains bitterly of the subserviency to *The Times* and treason to him. He says he knows the information was sent from Lord John's house, and threatens revenge. 'If you will be ruled by *The Times*,' he said to one of the Cabinet, '*The Times* has shown you already by a specimen that you will be ruled by a rod of iron.'"[2]

This gossip of the passing day shows the political importance which was attached to the attitude of *The Times;* but those who approached the question from the point of view of mere party misjudged the principal factor, no less than those who imagined that Delane's views would be governed by the receipt of favours. Now and at all times during his editorship Delane's conception of his position in the State, as editor of *The Times*, was something widely different both from the desires of party hacks and from the schemes of manipulators of the Press. There was, Delane held, a middle opinion in the mind of the

[1] See *Times*, July 3, 1846. "The Ministry deserves what it will probably obtain, a fair trial at the hands of all parties. We are not aware of any particular objection to which it is liable, unless it be the right honourable baronet selected for that very important and arduous place, the Board of Control. Surely it was not necessary to inflict on us, by his return to that office, the painful recollection of his former most unfortunate official career, especially when his qualifications are such as to assure us that his failure was something more than misfortune." The allusion is to the support given by Sir John Hobhouse to the Afghan policy of Lord Auckland.

[2] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, ii., 102.

nation, which swayed now towards one party and now towards another, but which regarded each party in turn rather as its instrument than as its master. This point of view was put clearly in one of the first articles which appeared in *The Times* after the change of Government in the middle of 1846:—

> If there is one lesson more than another which the late Administration has bequeathed to its successors, it is that it is not in the power of any one party to dictate the policy of the country. In fact the country will govern itself. It naturally, and almost unconsciously, makes a certain progress, which successive Ministries can only a little simplify or perplex, quicken or retard. In spite of Governments a great necessity grows up and compels a hearing. Measures spring forth, no one knows how, in the mind of the nation, at first rudely but truly conceived, then gradually taking solidity and form, and lastly forcing themselves into legislative being. This progressive movement triumphantly rides over parties, or rather, to speak more truly, like the messenger of an Oriental potentate, it impresses everyone it falls in with, compelling him to leave his own errands and forward the business of the nation.[1]

Of this governing opinion Delane conceived that *The Times* should be the organ. In that capacity it was his business to give to each Ministry in turn "a fair trial," and to put himself into close touch with the leaders of each party. So great was the authority and influence of *The Times* that each set of politicians in turn feared, courted, and reproached Delane. He was too powerful to be neglected; too independent ever to satisfy those who counted upon his consistent support. He went his own way, unmoved; guiding, interpreting, sometimes yielding to, the middle opinion of the governing classes in the nation.

John Bright used to say that if he felt at all doubt-

[1] Leading article, July 4, 1846.

ful as to the wisdom or morality of something he had said in a speech, he had only to wait till the next morning for the verdict of *The Times*; if it condemned him, he felt convinced that he was right; if it praised him, he was uneasy.[1] And similarly Cobden asserted that *The Times* was always wrong and that a condition precedent to the triumph of a good cause was the opposition of that paper. If by "right" and "good" be meant Liberal policy, Cobden's statement must be pronounced untrue by anyone who takes the trouble to look at the leading articles in *The Times* during the Russell Administration. Its policy during these years was consistently Liberal, and sometimes was much more right, as most men now hold, than Cobden's. In the matter of factory legislation, for instance, in which Cobden took the line of non-interference, Delane (who may have been influenced by his friendship with Lord Ashley) was a strong advocate of State regulation. He was by this time a stout Free Trader, but he argued as cogently as Mr. Asquith and other Liberals of our own day have done against the idea that there was any connexion, in logic or expediency, between the doctrine of fiscal Free Trade and a policy of general *laisser faire*. The Factory Act of 1847 was opposed on such grounds, but *The Times* took the side of what is now called social reform. "When," said Delane, "time shall have given the lie to the vatiocinations of political economists, when flourishing manufacturers, increasing exports and a happier people shall testify the truth of other arguments and the reality of other views, then the supporters of the Bill who have borne the heat and burden of the day will reap a full reward in the grati-

[1] "Trevelyan," p. 338.

tude of the poor and the approval of all good men." [1] On the question of Ireland Delane took an independent line, but on the whole supported the Administration of Lord Clarendon, who kept him constantly informed of the state of affairs. Lord Clarendon, during his term of office as Lord Lieutenant (1847–1852), had to cope with a succession of Irish crises—the famine, the Young Ireland agitation, the Smith O'Brien rising, Orange disturbances, and economic difficulties caused by the emigration of the peasantry and the bankruptcy of landlords. It cannot be said that he or the Government of which he was a member found any radical remedy for Irish discontents and difficulties, but he carried the country through very troublous times with little bloodshed, he kept an even keel between extremists, and was a forerunner in the advocacy of measures for the improvement of Irish agriculture. In all these respects he attached great importance, as his numerous letters to Delane and Reeve attest, to the support of *The Times*, and such support was generally forthcoming. Delane, though strong for law and order, was neither a landlords' man nor an Orangeman. He supported the Coercion Bill for which Lord Clarendon on assuming the Lord Lieutenancy felt compelled to ask: though the landlords might have behaved badly, there was no justification for murdering them; [2] but he reminded the Government that force by itself is no remedy. "Whig principles are at an end," he wrote, "when a Whig Ministry is compelled to repeat the tactics of its adversaries." [3] He supported the Encumbered Estates

[1] May 3, 1847. See also the articles of April 22 and May 18.
[2] See leading articles, November 17, 30, 1847.
[3] September 6, 1848.

rom which so much more was expected than
ly resulted, and addressed exhortations to the
[1] which that House would have done well to
nber at more than one later time. When the
emen took the law into their own hands, and
Clarendon dealt firmly with them, Delane
raged and supported him energetically. *The*
s of that day had no patience with men "who in
ame of religion and liberty give full scope to the
lses of a senseless and brutal fanaticism." "The
ge party in Ireland must feel that, while they are
ed with the blood of their fellow-countrymen,
to gratify their own puerile vanity, and to com-
morate their own insane days of jubilee, they have
ympathy to expect from England. The name of
their party has now become the subject of public
execration."[2] The articles, wrote Lord Clarendon
from the Viceregal Lodge, "have had a stunning
effect here, where it is as well known as on the Conti-
nent that *The Times* forms, or guides, or reflects—no
matter which—the public opinion of England. It
will, if anything can, put a curb on the mouth of these
furious Orangemen who, with their principles and their
parsons, are quite as subversive of law and order as
the priests and Young Irelandism."[3] Lord Claren-
don's attempts to find a permanent remedy for Irish
distress in improved methods of agriculture were
constantly encouraged by *The Times*. The need for
more practical instruction, for the organisation of
self-help, for the development of agricultural indus-
tries and fisheries—for the work, in short, of Sir

[1] See leading article, June 13, 1849.
[2] October 22 and 24, 1849.
[3] *Laughton*, i., 215 (where the date is wrongly given as October 14).

Horace Plunkett—was the theme of a series of leading articles.[1] It may surprise some readers of *The Times* under later editorships that the only fault which Lord Clarendon found with the articles was a lack of sympathy with the landlords. Certainly Delane's criticism of them was severe. He even, on occasion, made fun of them; striking a note which would have shocked *The Times* in the days of some of his successors. "If," he wrote (April 22, 1847), "the Irish landlords have not been the cause of getting their country into her present deplorable state, their legislative wisdom will certainly never be the means of helping her out of it." *The Times* "would have done more good," said Lord Clarendon, "if there had been more discrimination between the good and the bad landlords. The former do exist, though Delane may not believe it."[2] And again: "Delane has written some admirable articles, and I think the influence of *The Times* is greater here than ever. There are some landlords doing their duty admirably, and working like heroes, and they are somewhat riled at being confounded with the bad ones, whom, however, they hate all the more for that. In time, I hope that England will create something like public opinion in Ireland."[3]

A question upon which Delane took a consistently liberal line was the removal of Jewish disabilities. In this he was the more interested owing to his friendship with various members of the Rothschild family. This friendship originated in a curious way. Delane was in the habit of going to the same hairdresser's shop in

[1] See, *e.g.*, December 30, 1847; December 2, 4, 12, 1848.
[2] Letter to Reeve, July 19, 1847 (*Laughton*, i., 186).
[3] To Reeve, December 17, 1848 (*Laughton*, i., 206).

the City that was patronised by Baron Lionel Nathan de Rothschild (the "Sidonia" of "Coningsby" and the "Mr. Acton" of the Turf). One day Rothschild asked the proprietor of the shop who his handsome young customer was, and on being told that he was the new editor of *The Times* he made Delane's acquaintance. They became great friends. It was in New Court that the details were arranged for a relief fund which *The Times* started during the Irish famine, and Delane gave constant support to Rothschild in his claim to take his seat and to vote as Member for the City of London. The election of 1847 was particularly exciting. "Sat up late," Delane wrote in his diary on June 26, "and went to Rothschild's house in Piccadilly to assist him in preparing his address"; and on June 28, "saw the Rothschilds again to approve some omissions Lord John Russell had suggested." A month later the result was known:— "(July 29). To my great relief Rothschild, after several variations of the numbers, was this day returned for the City. I saw the Baroness afterwards in a state of almost frenzied delight and gratitude (July 30). Saw Rothschild with his brothers Anthony and Nathaniel in the City and was overwhelmed with thanks." Delane had argued the case of Jewish enfranchisement with forceful sympathy. Who is the good citizen? he had asked. Is it not he *qui consulta patrum qui leges juraque servat?* and the Jewish community is eminently law-abiding. Is it not he who brings enterprise, resource, energy into the common stock? It was matter of notoriety that such a test is "better answered by any score of Jews taken at random than by an equal number of almost any other persuasion." "It is scarcely possible," he

said, "for any person to advocate the continuance of the religious disabilities of the Jews except on grounds which are now avowed to be untenable." [1] The ground may have been logically untenable, but it was held by the House of Lords until 1858, when, after three rejections since 1833, a relief Bill was passed and Baron Rothschild at last took his seat.

Here was a case in which Delane was ahead, if not of public opinion, yet of the opinion of those who were able to prevail. *The Times* gave able support also to Lord John Russell's extension of the grant for education.[2] A controversy of the time upon which Delane suffered his paper to take a less liberal line was the once famous Hampden affair. The world moves, and it is difficult in these present days to understand the violent turmoil which arose when Lord John Russell offered the see of Hereford to Dr. Hampden. This worthy man had delivered the Bampton Lectures some years before, and had argued that the authority of the Scriptures was of greater weight than that of the Church. In 1836, when Lord Melbourne offered him the Regius Professorship of Divinity at Oxford, the High Church and Tory party started a heresy hunt, and this was renewed yet more hotly when Lord John Russell raised him to the bench. Thirteen of the bishops presented an address of remonstrance, and the appointment was fought with great bitterness. The controversy is best worth remembrance for the reply which Lord John sent to the Dean of Hereford's notification that he intended to vote against the election of Hampden: "I have had the honour to receive your letter of the 23rd [December, 1847], in

[1] Leading article, May 4, 1847.
[2] See, *e.g.*, a leading article of April 20, 1847.

which you intimate to me your intention of violating the law." *The Times*, though it treated the affair with some levity, supported the high ecclesiastical side. It invited Dr. Hampden to revise his lectures (December 25), and afterwards rallied him for forcing himself or allowing himself to be forced upon an unwilling diocese.[1] I find it difficult to think that Delane shared the views which his paper expressed on this subject. There is in the case of most newspapers a range of topics within which, as the editor regards them as indifferent, he leaves a leader-writer to take his own line; though in the Hampden case Delane gave instructions, I daresay, against too much zeal and in favour of some lightness of touch. There was, however, a real principle at stake. It was "for the sake of toleration and free inquiry" that Lord Melbourne persisted in Dr. Hampden's appointment as Regius Professor; and in the case of the opposition to his appointment to the bench Lord Clarendon saw an attempt of the High Church party to claim emancipation from the State: "to supersede the actual governing power and to establish in their stead the worst of all despotisms—the theocratical." "I can't bear," added Lord Clarendon, "to see *The Times* throwing its weight into the anti-social scale."[2] In this matter Lord John Russell took the Protestant and Low Church view, and *The Times* opposed him. In the next ecclesiastical question, on which Lord

[1] "Dr. Hampden, we presume, has a mission to fulfil. That mission, to all appearance, is to turn the Church inside out, and demonstrate its anatomy to the people. After taking the creeds to pieces—more pieces, in fact, than he can ever put together again—he next proved, upon his own person, how little power either Church or University had to interfere in such dangerous exhibitions. His last performance has been, doubtless against his will, but in pursuance of his destiny, to show up that venerable illusion, the share which the Church has in making a bishop" (January 13, 1848).

[2] *Laughton*, i., 193.

John took the same view, *The Times* with some reservations supported him. In September, 1850, a papal bull was issued establishing a Romish hierarchy in England with territorial titles. This was taken as an assault, from another side, upon the supremacy of the Crown. The Prime Minister, in a famous letter to the Bishop of Durham, stigmatised "the late aggressions of the Papacy upon our Protestantism as insolent and invidious," and connected it with the action of the High Churchmen at home: "clergymen, who have acknowledged in explicit terms the Queen's supremacy," had yet been "leading their flocks step by step to the very verge of the precipice." The cry of "No Popery" rang through the land. There were clamorous meetings, and addresses to the Crown poured in. The Government promised legislation to maintain the rights of the Crown, and presently produced the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill. This measure had some bearing, as will be explained, upon the course of general politics. It ultimately passed into law, but so watered down in view of Peelite opposition as to become a dead letter. No one was a penny the worse or the better for all the hubbub, which is now best remembered by a cartoon in *Punch* depicting Lord John as a small boy chalking up "No Popery" on the wall and then running away. If Greville may be trusted, there was more political expediency than religious principle in the outcry. "Some affect to be very angry and make a great noise because they think it answers an end. John Russell is somewhat in this way, for I don't believe he *really* cares much; *The Times* newspaper does the same, and blows up the coals for the sake of popularity; but Delane, who begged me not to write, as I was inclined to do, some-

thing in mitigation of the movement, told me he thought the whole thing gross humbug and a pack of nonsense." [1] There are often subjects which an editor allows to be brought upon the stage less because he believes in their importance than because they tickle the groundlings. Some years later *The Times* revived the Protestant cry. "I am amused," wrote Delane from the country, "to see from Miss Marsh's hysterical letter that you have brought the old Protestant horse out again. I had been base enough not to read the article. He is a staunch old beast, and has been a long while in the stable, but I would back him against Lowe's Trojan horse any day. It is wonderful what go there is in the old brute still, and how people back him who care nothing for any number of Gladiateurs." [2]

The Russell Administration, though it carried the country safely through some troublous times and passed a fair number of useful measures of reform, was in some respects a weak Administration. It not only made blunders, but being divided against itself it promised more than it performed and often left an impression of irresolution. In 1848 it surpassed the exploit of a much later Government (1914) by producing four different versions of a Budget. *The Times* on such occasions was unsparing in its criticisms. "With all our respect," it said, "for the individual members of the Cabinet, we should speak to little purpose and fail to persuade the bulk of our

[1] *Greville* (November 10, 1850), iii., 369. Presently Greville did write a letter and Delane printed it.

[2] *Dasent*, ii., 179. Neither sportsmen nor politicians will need to be told that the date was early in the year 1866, before Gladiateur had a successor as winner of the Derby and when Mr. Lowe and Mr. Gladstone were hurling quotations from Virgil at each other on the floor of the House, the Reform Bill figuring as the Trojan horse.

readers if we were to demand and repose entire confidence in the Minister and his plans. Little is promised and still less is done. Important measures are hung up. There is a want of momentum and a certain vacillation betrayed. The people ask not revolution in the common sense, but some decided progress; and if we cannot get that progress from one Minister, it will require him to abdicate and give place to another." [1] And again, after describing how the Ministry had "limped through a long session" of "infirm purposes and immature counsels," *The Times* told Lord John that though "the English people liked any government better than no government, it infinitely prefers a strong one to a weak one." [2] These were articles of the kind which the party man (on the side attacked) abhors; which the man in the street greatly likes. "The Government," wrote Greville on the occasion of the first of the series, "have been sadly vexed at an article in *The Times* on Friday, speaking of them, and Lord John especially, very contemptuously. The truth is, *The Times* thinks it has sniffed out that they cannot go on, and wants, according to its custom, to give them a shove; but matters are not ripe for a change yet, nor anything like it." Perhaps they were not; but Greville went on to say: "It is evident that the notion of the weakness and incapacity of the Government is spreading far and wide, and nothing can exceed Charles Wood's unpopularity, nor is any confidence felt in Lord John himself." [3] There may have been some element of truth in Greville's account of the attitude of *The*

[1] March 10, 1848.
[2] September 6, 1848.
[3] *Greville*, iii., 151 (March 12, 1848).

Times, but another explanation is possible—namely, that *The Times* not being a party paper was free to utter honest and disinterested criticism.

The Government limped through two more sessions, and then came the beginning of the end. On February 17, 1851, the Budget was produced and was so badly received that the defeat of the Government seemed certain. With a considerable surplus in hand, Sir Charles Wood had offered to repeal only a portion of the unpopular window tax, and he continued the income tax without alteration of its basis. *The Times* fell upon this proposal, and in more than one article insisted upon the policy of differentiation between earned and unearned income. "Professional men and tradesmen, and all who live by spinning the contents of their brains, are satisfied that there is deep injustice in taxing those brains, which to-morrow may be dust and desolation, as if they were broad acres that have drunk in the sunshine and the rain ever since the creation, and will to the crack o'doom." "Any system which treats a *permanent* and a *transitory* income as identical entities for fiscal purposes is an act of public dishonesty of the grossest kind." [1] Opposition to Sir Charles Wood gathered weight, but the crash came on a different issue. On February 20 Mr. Locke King made a motion to assimilate the county franchise to that of the boroughs. This was poaching on Lord John's preserve; he offered a Ministerial Reform Bill hereafter, and asked the House meanwhile to reject the private member's

[1] Leading articles, February 18 and 23. See also that of February 19. It may console any reader, who thinks that reform is apt in this country to proceed at breakneck pace, to be reminded that fifty-six years elapsed before the differentiation, advocated by *The Times* in 1851, was effected by Mr. Asquith.

motion. The House refused, and Mr. King obtained a majority of 50 over Ministers. Delane thereupon pronounced, as Sir James Graham put it,[1] "sentence of death upon the Government." "It is useless to conceal the fact that the Government is losing weight both in the House and out of it. . . . As to the promise of a measure next session, the announcement is like that of the Newgate ordinary who promised to take the second part of his text next Sunday, though the persons he was addressing were to be hanged the next morning. The only difference is that in the present instance it is the preacher rather than the congregation that is in danger."[2]

The political situation, created by the division on Mr. Locke King's motion, was very confused. No party had a clear or independent majority. The Tories were in a minority. The Whigs could not carry on without the support of the Peelites. The latter were separated from the Whigs on the question of the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, and from the Tories on that of Protection. Nobody knew what would happen, but Delane knew what he wanted. On the evening of the day after the division there was a party at Lady Granville's, at which Delane was present, and next morning (February 22) *The Times* announced to the astonished town that the Government had resigned. What was to come next? There was one of those periods of uncertainty and intrigue which are delicious to political quidnuncs. One catches a taste of it in Greville's pages. The crisis had found him in the country. He hurries up to town. His

[1] In a letter to Greville, iii., 383.
[2] Leading article, February 21.

friend Sir James Graham has written to him a note of impressions from the point of view of the Peelites; they are masters of the situation, and some of Greville's informants thought that they would patch the thing up, though Graham wrote in a different sense. Greville goes on to Brooks's, which he finds "very full and excited." If the Whigs and the Peelites fail to agree, the Tories will have to come in, and "everybody goes over the lists of peers and commoners whom Stanley can command." Greville goes everywhere and picks up what he can from different sides, but there are things about which "everybody asks, nobody can tell." Delane also was in the hurly-burly, and often nearer than Greville to the centre of it. As soon as Lord John had resigned, Delane had taken a clear and strong line upon the proper solution of the crisis. There must, he urged, be a coalition (February 21, 24). "At half-past four yesterday," writes Greville (February 25), "Delane came into my room, straight from Aberdeen: Aberdeen, Graham and John Russell trying to agree upon some plan, and to form a Government. Aberdeen told him he was still engaged in this task, but, he owned, with anything but sanguine hopes of success. Delane said to him he hoped if he did succeed he would not overlook the numbers and importance of the Liberal party. Aberdeen replied, 'You may rest assured that I am well aware of their importance, and I believe I am at least as Radical as any of those who are just gone out.'" [1] Aberdeen failed in the task in which Delane encouraged him. Lord John would not give up the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, and the Peelites would not hear of it. The ball then passed to Lord

[1] *Greville*, iii., 383.

Stanley, who in turn made overtures to the Peelites, but he would not or could not give up Protection, and so his attempt at a coalition failed likewise.

Lord John Russell and the Whigs thereupon came back. Such returns seldom last long. The fall of the Government a year later was brought about, however, by causes which had to do with foreign policy, and it is in relation to foreign affairs that the Administration of Lord John Russell is most remembered. The years of Palmerston's Foreign Secretaryship (1846–1851) were among the most unquiet which, with our own country at peace, have ever fallen to an English Minister's lot; nor is there any period in our history about which so little general agreement has even yet been reached. To one school of political thought, Palmerston during these years is the noisy firebrand who instigated revolts which he could not assist, who meddled everywhere throughout Europe, bullying the weak but not resisting the strong, who left England without a friend.[1] To another school, he is the masterful patriot, who served the cause of popular liberties abroad, who applied to the British throughout the world the maxim *Civis Romanus sum*, and who yet maintained the peace. Our concern here is only with Delane's part in this controversy. He was of the former of the schools just indicated, the school of Aberdeen and Gladstone. Palmerston, it was said, used at this period to throw his copy of *The Times* into the fire each day.[2] Lord Aberdeen, now in

[1] "When Palmerston was dismissed by Lord John Russell, a foreign ruler on an insecure throne observed to an Englishman, 'This is a blow to me, for so long as Lord Palmerston remained at the Foreign Office, it was certain that you could not procure a single ally in Europe'" (Morley's "Gladstone," i., 367).

[2] See below, p. 97.

retirement, watched Palmerston's proceedings with suspicion and alarm, and was constant in advice, instruction, and entreaty to Delane. "I may almost say," wrote Lord Aberdeen, "that the question of peace or war is in your hands"; and again, a little later, "I have frequently told you that I thought the peace of the two countries would be materially affected by the course which you should think proper to pursue. I shall watch your language with interest, believing that it will do much to regulate the general feeling of the country."[1] This was in connexion with the controversy over the Spanish marriages which seemed to threaten war between England and France, and in which Lord Palmerston's action had, according to Lord Aberdeen, precipitated, and perhaps even to some extent justified, the French breach of faith.[2] Delane's attitude in this crisis gave satisfaction to Lord Aberdeen. *The Times* denounced the breach of faith, but insisted that the marriage of the Duc de Montpensier to the Infanta was not worth a breach of the peace. "Our Sovereign has been slighted, our Ministry duped, our confidence betrayed and our influence temporarily paralyzed in the Peninsula. . . . Although we have expressed as openly as any of our contemporaries our sense of the mischievous conduct of the French Court in these transactions, we attach the greatest importance to confining our objections within accurate limits. This unfortunate question cannot be allowed to govern the foreign policy of this country."[3] "Whatever may be thought of the tortuous policy of the French King in these affairs,

[1] *Dasent*, i., 58, 66.

[2] A full discussion of this matter from Lord Aberdeen's point of view is contained in Lord Stanmore's "Lord Aberdeen," pp. 162—172.

[3] Leading articles, November 10, December 2, 1846.

and of the mode in which he has been served by his own Ministers, he has profited as much, first and last, by the errors of our Foreign Secretary as by the dexterity of his own; and we seek in vain through this correspondence for proofs of that caution, firmness and foresight which might have averted the evils we now complain of, and prevented this unseemly altercation between the Ministers of two great countries which have no cause of quarrel among themselves." Attacks like this upon Lord Palmerston's policy were frequent. "We should be wanting in our public duty," said *The Times*, "if we failed to express our apprehension that the present Foreign Secretary is for many reasons—some real and some though unreal not less powerful—ill-qualified for directing with success the foreign policy of the Crown." [1]

This was an opinion which the Crown strongly shared. The policy of the Court was Austrian; that of Lord Palmerston was Italian. The Queen and the Prince expected, as was the Sovereign's right, to be consulted or at least informed before foreign despatches were sent, or decisions involving foreign issues were taken; Lord Palmerston, in this matter, treated both the Court and the Prime Minister with some economy of consideration. In August, 1848, *The Times* on two successive days, while professing a certain sympathy with the Italian cause, stood up for the powers that were in possession in Italy, preached against the dangers of embroiling England, and planted various thorns in Lord Palmerston's side. These articles were read at the Palace with a lively pleasure that could not be restrained. "The Queen," wrote her Majesty to the Prime Minister (August 11),

[1] Leading articles, January 15, 21, February 10, 1847.

"has read the leading articles of *The Times* of yesterday and to-day with the greatest satisfaction as they express almost entirely the same views and feelings which she entertains. The Queen hopes that Lord John will read them." [1] Presently the Court must have received from the same quarter another thrill of pleasure, attended, however, by a shock of pained surprise at Lord Palmerston's proceedings. This was in connexion with an affair which made some stir at the time, both in Parliament and in the inner Ministerial circle—"the affair of the Sicilian arms." The way in which Delane came to learn the facts is worth telling. He was out one day with the Old Surrey foxhounds, and in the hunting-field met Tom Hood, the arms contractor. Hood said something casually about a consignment of arms which had been sent from this country, with the consent of Palmerston, to the Sicilian insurgents. Delane enjoyed the day's run none the less we may be sure for this conversation, and on returning to London started off on another scent. Having verified his friend's information, he charged the Government with having connived at a supply of arms from the Queen's stores to the enemies of a sovereign in whose quarrel she was neutral. The facts were that the insurgents had applied to a contractor for stores; that he had none in stock, having just delivered all he had ready to the Ordnance; that he asked to be allowed to have them back, promising to replace the stores shortly; that Lord Palmerston, to whom the matter was referred, gave his consent; and that the insurgents thus secured an immediate supply. The Government collectively were innocent of this breach of neutrality,

[1] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, ii., 226.

for the statement in *The Times* [1] was the first intimation that Lord John Russell had of "this provoking business" (as he called it). Having found that *The Times* was perfectly correct, he "compelled Lord Palmerston, sorely against his will, to make a formal official apology to the King of Naples, the man whom he most hated and despised in the whole world." [2] The Queen, and probably Lord John also, were disappointed that Palmerston consented to eat the leek. It had been expected that he would refuse to send the apology, and in that event Lord John had promised the Queen to transfer Palmerston from the Foreign Office to Ireland.[3] Greville, who was bitterly against Palmerston, gloats over this episode, lamenting, however, that Palmerston succeeded in parrying the attacks made upon him in Parliament. But the Minister was "dreadfully nettled at *The Times*"; and Sir Charles Wood, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, begged for mercy. Delane was graciously pleased to promise a respite: "they had recorded their opinions and did not want to do any more." The respite, however, was not long, and there were soon other opinions which had to be recorded. The case against Lord Palmerston was brought to a head in the general indictment of his policy which was launched in both Houses of Parliament in June, 1850. Lord Stanley and Lord Aberdeen led the attack in the Lords, and it was carried by a majority of 37. In the Commons, on the other hand, after a four nights' debate, the Government secured a majority of 46. This was the

[1] "The emissaries of the Sicilian insurgents were openly received by the Queen's Ministers in London; they were even allowed to purchase arms and stores of war in this country with the privity and assistance of the Foreign Office" (leading article, January 6, 1849).

[2] Reeve's note in *Greville*, 1837-1852, iii., 272.

[3] Spencer Walpole's "Russell," ii., 50—52.

occasion of Lord Palmerston's famous *Civis Romanus sum* speech. As a feat of physical and mental energy in a man of sixty-six it was wonderful. He spoke for five hours without turning a hair or moistening his lips or losing his voice or missing a point. He had triumphed over a mass of educated opinion in both Houses; over the Queen and the Prince and most of the Cabinet; over all foreign nations; and he had triumphed also, as a shrewd observer noted, "over that mighty potentate *The Times*." [1] *The Times*, in its leading article on the debate (July 1), remarked that "with the exception of two or three expectant lawyers and such statesmen as Monckton Milnes and Bernal Osborne, not a single independent member of Liberal principles cared to do more than pay to his party the reluctant tribute of his vote. The majority," it continued, "is probably just sufficient to enable Ministers to retain office without disgrace; but they have received such a lesson on the conduct of the foreign relations of the Crown as the boldest of them will not readily forget."

Palmerston felt strongly about the attacks in *The Times*, and attributed them to malice. He complained, wrote Prince Albert in a Memorandum of August, 1850, about a "plot which had been got up in this country against him and urged on by foreigners, complained particularly of Lord Clarendon, Mr. Greville of the Privy Council, Mr. Reeve ditto, and their attacks upon him in *The Times*, and of Mr. Delane, the editor of *The Times*, of Guizot, Princess Lieven, etc., etc., etc." [2] Palmerston's complaint, so far as Greville and Reeve were concerned, was not

[1] Lady Clarendon's journal, in *Maxwell*, i., 312.
[2] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, ii., 314.

without some justification. Reeve was hand and glove with Greville; and, as principal leader-writer on foreign affairs, sometimes went further in his sympathy with the Court and antipathy to Palmerston than Delane himself approved. "His dynastic tendencies, or rather those of his patrons," wrote Delane of Reeve a few years later, "have led us into endless scrapes and contradictions, and constantly made us the advocates of an unpopular and anti-national policy."[1] It may be asked why Delane allowed his paper thus to be led into scrapes and into the advocacy of wrong causes, for Delane as editor was supreme. The answer is that even the most diligent of editors sometimes find it impossible to exercise complete control over articles which they do not themselves write.[2] It is proper to remember further that Delane's words, quoted above, were written in the thick of the quarrel which led to Reeve's retirement from *The Times*, and at a time when Delane himself had come into close relations with Palmerston.

The presence of Kossuth in England produced a further storm. The Hungarian revolution was another of the cases in which Palmerston's pronounced sympathies with the popular and anti-Austrian cause brought him into conflict with the Court and caused some uneasiness to those of his colleagues who, though they might sympathise in the abstract with his views, were afraid above all things of his embroiling this country with foreign Powers. This point of view is put in a characteristic letter of Lord Clarendon. "How often one has occasion," he wrote in October,

[1] *Dasent*, i., 221.
[2] On this point, see below, p. 195.

1849, "to agree with Melbourne's dictum of *Damn it! why can't everybody be quiet?*" [1] On that occasion, however, Palmerston had his colleagues with him. The Hungarian rising had been crushed by the aid of Russia, and Kossuth with other fugitives had sought safety within the Turkish frontier. Russia and Austria demanded the surrender of the refugees. The Sultan refused, and Palmerston sent the British fleet to the Dardanelles to support Turkey. *The Times*, though its tone was anything but friendly to Kossuth, strongly approved of this support,[2] and Lord Clarendon thought the article "excellent." After a period of internment in Turkey Kossuth came to England, and was received with popular enthusiasm equalled only by that given to Garibaldi ten years later. *The Times*, admitting that its view ran counter to the popular sentiment of the day, endeavoured to stem the tide. So high did feeling run that *The Times* had even to deny a charge that it had been bribed to write against Kossuth.[3] The charge was absurd; the line taken by Delane was perfectly intelligible and defensible on public grounds. It was mischievous, misleading, and a cruel kindness, so *The Times* argued, to encourage foreign revolutionaries by popular demonstrations to think that they would obtain aid from England.[4] This was part of the line taken generally by opponents of Palmerston's foreign policy. Lord Clarendon thought that *The Times* had rendered a "service to the cause of order abroad and common sense at home. It must have been a difficult task to

[1] *Laughton*, i., 215.
[2] October 3, 1849.
[3] Similarly in 1849 Palmerston spoke of "articles put into *The Times* by Austrian agents in London" (*Ashley*, ii., 106).
[4] See leading articles of October 9 and November 14 and 18, 1851.

stem the tide of ignorant enthusiasm; but it was done with consummate skill and tact, and *The Times* will be all the more powerful for risking momentary unpopularity." [1] The Cabinet, early in November (1851), settled that Lord Palmerston should not himself receive Kossuth, but he received a public deputation and addresses in which, as Queen Victoria pointed out, "allied sovereigns with whom she professes to be on term of peace and amity are called Despots and Assassins." The Queen requested the Prime Minister to bring the matter before the Cabinet. Palmerston's conduct was disapproved, but not formally censured, and he continued to go his own way. On the night of December 1–2 Louis Napoleon, the Prince President, carried out his *coup d'état* against the Republican Constitution, and Palmerston, without consulting his colleagues or informing the Queen, expressed on behalf of Great Britain his acceptance, and even approval, of the accomplished fact. *The Times*, on the other hand, as Lord Clarendon complained, "battered at it every day, more than was required either by public opinion at home or by English interests abroad." [2] "*The Times*," wrote Lord Clarendon, "is doing a vast deal of harm upon French affairs; but Reeve's virtuous indignation is not to be controlled; so, in order that he may please Guizot and the Grotesque [3] and her dear Alexis (as she calls Tocqueville), a bad feeling is to be created between the two countries." [4] Lord Clarendon and Lord Granville protested, and there was an interesting correspondence, to which reference is made in another

[1] *Laughton*, i., 240 (November 22, 1851).
[2] *Maxwell*, i., 343.
[3] Mrs. Grote, wife of the historian.
[4] *Maxwell*, i., 330.

chapter, upon the due limits of newspaper criticism in international affairs. To tackle *The Times* was almost, says Lord Fitzmaurice, as formidable a task in those years as dealing with the French President.[1] But Louis Napoleon was "irritated and annoyed beyond measure by the language of *The Times*"; so Ministers who thought it desirable to stand well with him had to try to stop its mouth. Meanwhile Palmerston's high-handed acceptance of the *coup d'état* proved his undoing. The Queen protested energetically; the Prime Minister declined to accept his colleague's explanations (December 19), and Lord Granville was appointed to reign at the Foreign Office in Palmerston's stead. These facts were announced to the world in *The Times* of December 24, 1851. The paper rejoiced loudly at Palmerston's dismissal; and though it had the generosity and good sense to acknowledge the fallen Minister's "indefatigable activity in the public service, vast capacity for work, courage in presence of dangers and charm of social manner" (December 24), it closed the year with a parting kick, rejoicing that the country would now have a Foreign Secretary who knew how to "preserve her boasted neutrality without either compromise or petulance; without offering the right hand to rampant despotism and the left to democratic conspirators." Such remarks gave great satisfaction at Court. "The articles in *The Times*," wrote the Queen to the Prime Minister (December 25), "are very good." Her Majesty seems, however, to have liked the vinegar better than the oil. "Great care ought to be taken," she added, "in bestowing any praise on him, as he always takes advantage of it to

[1] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 67.

turn against those who meant it merely to soothe him." [1]

So fell Palmerston; as many men at the time believed, never to rise again. The Austrian Prime Minister, Prince Schwarzenberg, celebrated the fall of his enemy by a ball. In Prussia they rejoiced in doggerel lines at the prospect of being rid for ever of "the Devil's son." [2] The Firebrand is quenched, thought the gentlemen at the clubs. "There *was* a Palmerston," said Disraeli. But destiny had other fortunes in store for Lord Palmerston. Within a few weeks his star was again in the ascendant. On February 20, 1852, he had his "tit for tat with Lord John," and the Whig Government fell. During the three hundred days of the ensuing Derby Administration, Palmerston was thrice invited to join it. On the formation of Lord Aberdeen's Administration in December, 1852, he became Home Secretary, and on the fall of Lord Aberdeen he became Prime Minister. He held undisputed power as such, with one brief interval, for ten years. Nor was this the only turn of Fortune's wheel. Delane of *The Times*, who had contributed not a little to the fall of Palmerston in 1851, was destined to become in later years his constant supporter.

[1] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, ii., 422. Had the Queen seen the characteristic letter of Lord Palmerston (December 23) declining the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland? This offer, which Mr. Ashley not unreasonably calls "almost comical," was intended, I suppose, to soothe Palmerston; he made his answer the vehicle of a telling retort upon Lord John: see *Ashley*, ii., 212.

[2] "Hat der Teufel einen Sohn,
So ist er sicher Palmerston."

CHAPTER IV

THE CRIMEAN WAR (1852-1856).

"Except for those who remember the year 1854, there will always, I imagine, be some difficulty in conceiving the real height of the ascendant then enjoyed by *The Times*."—KINGLAKE.

THE short-lived Administration of Lord Derby (February 26—December 20, 1852) need not long detain us here. Delane was, as usual, ready to give the newcomers a chance. There would be no public advantage, he argued, in seeking to evict the new men at once; it were well to let things go on quietly until a general election. "The best thing that can happen to us now is that the new Government should have a fair trial, and we do not know any law of political morality that should make a little wise forbearance a positive sin" (February 25). "We are very sensible," wrote Disraeli to Delane, "of the admirable tact and great effect of your articles." "Everything goes very well," added the Minister, enjoying for the first time the sweets of office. The general election was fixed for July, and Disraeli sent an early copy of his manifesto to Delane. "I hope you will be able to back me, as the movement is *my own*, but if you can't, we must take the fortune of war without grumbling." It was hardly to be called backing that Disraeli got from his friend. Delane thought that "the movement" was nothing but mystification. Disraeli was described in *The Times* as a "quack,

doctor" and an "inimitable illusionist." The country wanted to know whether he stood for Protection or against. All that he offered was "a poetical and mythical haze," "sweet words and the vapour of some spiritual chloroform."[1] The state of parties was little altered by the elections; and Disraeli thought that if only *The Times* had "not deserted" us, "but had written us up," "our returns would have been several seats better."[2] Ministers were still in a minority without the Peelites. Parliament met in November, and issue was joined on the subject of Free Trade. Lord Palmerston saved Ministers by an amendment which they could accept, but they were left at the mercy of other combinations. Disraeli made a desperate effort to save the situation by a Budget of great ingenuity—intending, if he carried the day, to remodel the Government (so he told Delane) by the inclusion of Palmerston and Gladstone; but the plans miscarried, and Ministers were defeated. The oratorical duel between Disraeli and Gladstone, preceding the fateful division, was described by *The Times* in an article which attracted much attention.[3]

"This I know," Disraeli had said, in defending his Budget and anticipating defeat, "that England does not love coalitions." "Nothing," wrote Delane a few days later,[4] "suits the people to be governed and the measures to be passed so well as a good coalition." At the time Delane's view prevailed, but the view of Disraeli did not have to wait very long for its verifica-

[1] Leading articles, July 16, 17.
[2] "The Life of Disraeli," iii., 383.
[3] See a reference to it below, p. 270. The article was cut out and preserved by the Queen (*Queen Victoria's Letters*, ii., 499, *n.*).
[4] *The Times* leading article, December 22, 1852.

tion. On the resignation of Lord Derby, the Queen sent for Lord Aberdeen. "He was summoned by telegraph this morning," wrote Delane to Dasent on December 19, "and went down at once by the 10 o'clock train. I shall see him this evening on my way from Higgins's.[1] This may make me a little late at the office, but everything is arranged." A Coalition Government of Whigs and Peelites was formed. Few Governments have included so many illustrious men; it was, as people said at the time, a second Administration of All the Talents. But it lasted only for two years, and a tragic irony was in wait for it. The Administration of "the most devoted lover of peace who had governed the country since the Revolution"[2] is famous in history only for making a war of which the necessity must at best be considered doubtful. The same war which filled Lord Aberdeen with unavailing regret and which led to his overthrow redounded, however, to the credit of his journalistic friend. The reputation of *The Times* was made, it is true, before the Crimean War; but Delane's conduct of the paper during the war was the occasion of new developments in journalistic enterprise, it displayed on a conspicuous field the power of the Press, and it gave to Delane the opportunity of revealing great gifts of courage, initiative and insight. It led, too, to some shifting in his personal attachments among politicians, and it raised to the highest point the reputation both of himself and of his paper. Those who think to solve all questions of national policy, even the most complicated, by asking the question *Cui bono?* and who are quick with an

[1] Matthew James Higgins, "Jacob Omnium."
[2] Lord Stanmore's "Aberdeen," p. 219.

answer dictated by their prejudices, may be tempted to suggest that the war which benefited a newspaper was by that newspaper fomented. It has often been said that *The Times* was in the forefront of the popular clamour which hounded the country into the declaration of war against Russia in March, 1854; but though *The Times* was, at a certain stage and in certain directions, an inspiring force throughout the Crimean War, though it came in the end to lead public opinion, yet at first its line was uncertain, and the lead was only taken when events and passions, beyond the control alike of Ministers and newspapers, were already ordering the march of events.

Lord Stanmore has described the conflicting views, passions, prejudices and jealousies with which Lord Aberdeen had to contend in preparing the way for the Coalition, and the memoirs of the day are full of the yet greater difficulties which confronted the Minister when the time came for dividing the spoils. "The cake is too small," said Disraeli with sardonic glee. The Cabinet pudding always is too small for the number of hungry mouths, and when the Government is a Coalition the difficulties are increased twofold. "Once a Cabinet Minister always a Cabinet Minister" is a claim commonly made; but it was obviously impossible for Lord Aberdeen to include all who had been members of the last Whig Administration: room had to be made for a contingent of the Peelites, and then there were the claims to be considered of the Leaguers and Radicals who had contributed greatly to the defeat of the ambiguously tariff-reforming Government of Lord Derby. Of the personal rivalries which beset Lord Aberdeen, Delane also

had in a minor degree his experience. When Cabinets are making, influential editors have full letter-bags; and as Delane's intimacy with Lord Aberdeen was well known, he was besieged by applications, suggestions, reminders. Monckton Milnes, for instance, impressed upon him, as Lord Aberdeen's friend, that things would assuredly go wrong if Lord Palmerston were not given high place: there were three hundred men at least who were resolved to know the reason why.[1] Lord Aberdeen had from the first recognised the importance of including Lord Palmerston; who, if left out, might easily have joined, or led, a coalition of another sort. He chose, however, the Home Office, but his dominant interest was still in foreign affairs. It is said that on one occasion the Queen, interested and alarmed about some strikes in the North of England, asked her Home Secretary if he had any news for her. "No, ma'am," replied Palmerston," I have heard nothing, but it seems certain the Turks have crossed the Danube."[2] The Foreign Office was taken by Lord John Russell for a time.[3] Lord Aberdeen kept Delane informed of the progress of Cabinet-making, begging him, however, to say nothing about the places assigned to Lord John and Lord Palmerston until the final list was ready—a very necessary precaution in view of the delicate and difficult negotiations which the Prime Minister was carrying on with those formidable rivals. When the Cabinet was made, it may have comprised All the Talents, but it did not comprise all the virtues. Naughty tempers raged. The Whigs thought that

[1] *Dasent*, i., 151.
[2] Lord Esher's "Yoke of Empire," p. 108.
[3] He was succeeded by Lord Clarendon in February, 1853, and remained in the Cabinet without office until January, 1855.

the Peelites had too large a share of the loaves and fishes. The Peelites thought that they had been peculiarly patriotic in coalescing with such creatures as the Whigs. The Whigs thought that they had shown remarkable generosity in consenting to serve under such a thing as a Peelite Prime Minister, and accused their Peelite colleagues of a desire to "kick down the ladder by which *alone* they have climbed to power." [1] An article in *The Times* added fuel to the flame of jealousy. In describing the composition of the Cabinet it remarked of the Foreign Secretary: "Lord John Russell has so little of the accomplishments required for his new office that we can only suppose he is keeping it for a successor, most probably Lord Clarendon, who otherwise will not have a seat in the Cabinet." [2] This was a correct prediction; but Lord John, who affected indifference to the Press, was nevertheless very angry. Now and hereafter he laboured under a complete delusion about Delane. Not being able apparently to conceive that any criticism of him could be disinterested, and having never mastered the fact that Delane used his own judgment, the Foreign Secretary saw in this article evidence of a dark plot against him by the Prime Minister. Lord Clarendon took up the cudgels for Lord John, and in a letter to Mr. Reeve complained of the article in *The Times* as most unfair to Lord John who had taken the Foreign Office temporarily "solely to oblige Lord Aberdeen and against his own wishes." "I have *never*," continued Lord Clarendon, "seen him so mortified and annoyed, because the friendship between Lord A. and Delane is, as he said,

[1] *Maxwell*, i., 355.
[2] Leading article, December 25, 1852.

well known, and nobody will suppose that attacks on him would find their way into *The Times*, unless they were agreeable to Lord A." [1]

Then, again, Delane had for some time been on friendly terms with Sir William Molesworth and his Andalusia; and as Cobden and Bright desired to stand aside, Sir William was of opinion that he was the advanced Radical who ought to be included. He put his claims high; he would make "a great sacrifice," Delane was informed, "in accepting any office except that of Colonial Secretary." [2] That post, which then included the War Office, was allotted to the Duke of Newcastle; but Molesworth was made First Commissioner of Works, and Delane persuaded Lord Aberdeen to give him a seat in the Cabinet.[3] It is an illustration of the appeal which resistance to Russia made to minds of many different kinds at the time that Molesworth, the representative in the Coalition of the Philosophic Radicals, became one of the foremost members of the war party in the Cabinet.[4] Those who, wise in knowledge of later events, are inclined to say that England on this occasion "backed the wrong horse," should remember, too, that Mr. Gladstone to the end of his life stoutly maintained the justice and expediency of the Crimean war.[5]

Delane himself, like other "pious editors," was against war in the abstract, and in June, 1851, Cobden quoted with high approval an article in *The Times*— "the most powerful vehicle of public opinion in the

[1] *Maxwell*, i., 355.
[2] *Dasent*, i., 151.
[3] *Laughton*, i., 269.
[4] Mrs. Simpson's "Many Memories," p. 264; Cobden's "Speeches," p. 322; Mrs. Fawcett's "Life of Molesworth," pp. 326 *et seq.*
[5] *English Historical Review*, April, 1887.

world"[1]—which had spoken of a European war as alike improbable and undesirable. As late as April, 1854, Bright recorded in his journal a conversation with Delane on the war: "his opinion as to its non-necessity agrees precisely with my own."[2] This little book is not a history, and it were out of place to enter here into the complicated chain of events and passions which quickly made a European war appear to the great majority of the British people necessary and inevitable. It has been said that the Crimean war was made by Louis Napoleon, or by Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, or by Lord Palmerston. Some say that this statesman or diplomatist, or that, had a clear policy throughout; others think that none knew his own mind steadily except Cavour. Some think that the war might have been averted if Lord Palmerston had been in command instead of Lord Aberdeen; others, if Lord Aberdeen had been undisputed master in his Cabinet. Lord Clarendon said that England "drifted into the war." Mr. Gladstone denied this. These, as well as the larger issues of the policy of the war, are questions to which it is not easy even now for historians—as an eminent one among them has said—to give a confident answer.[3] What is certain and what alone is here of direct concern is that there were two shades of opinion in the Cabinet, and that the country itself was for some time in two minds. Delane's conduct of *The Times* reflected for many months the dubiety of public opinion. "*The Times* newspaper," wrote Greville on July 12, 1853, "always famous for its versatility and inconsistency,

[1] Cobden's "Speeches," p. 268.
[2] *Trevelyan*, p. 233.
[3] Morley's "Gladstone," i., 479.

has lately produced articles on the Eastern question on the same day of the most opposite characters, one warlike and firm, the next vehemently pacific by some other hand." [1] Greville saw in this two-faced attitude an indication of the differences which existed in the Cabinet and of a double influence acting upon Delane. "Clarendon approved of the first article and found great fault with the other, while Aberdeen wrote to Delane and expressed his strong approbation of the second." Delane certainly thought that Lord Stratford at Constantinople was too Turkish in his diplomacy. A letter to *The Times* correspondent at that capital has been printed in which the editor lays down in peremptory terms the main lines of the paper's policy. "You seem to imagine that England can desire nothing better than to sacrifice all its greatest interests and its most cherished objects—to support barbarism against civilization, the Moslem against the Christian, slavery against liberty, to exchange peace for war—all to oblige the Turk. Pray undeceive yourself. For political purposes we connive at the existence of the Turk; he fills a blank in Europe, he is a barrier to a more aggressive Power . . . [But] we in this country are not such Quixotes as to fancy it our bounden duty to sacrifice ourselves at the pleasure of the Turk, and find that our own interests and those of our colonies all over the world give us quite enough to do and to protect." [2] This was in September, 1853. Even when the British and French fleets had been sent to the East, Lord Aberdeen clung to the hope of peace. On October 4 he had a long conversation

[1] Greville's allusion was presumably to two leading articles on July 8, 1853.

[2] *Dasent*, i., 159.

with Delane, and said that he would resign rather than incur the responsibility of declaring war with Russia on such grounds as then existed.[1] Delane, however, was already convinced that war was inevitable. On the day before his interview with Lord Aberdeen, he had seen or heard from Lord Clarendon, and had been convinced by what he learnt that "there is an end of negotiation and it is war at last."[2] But the public mind was still not firmly settled. On October 15, Delane told Lord Aberdeen that there was "some improvement in public opinion." The Prime Minister was glad to hear it, and only regretted that the editor was not doing more to advance the cause of peace.[3]

When once war had been decided upon, or was thought by Delane to be inevitable, he threw aside reserve and used his own judgment with small respect for persons or conventions. On March 11, 1854, *The Times*, in the course of an article upon some of the diplomatic correspondence, referred to what afterwards became well known but was then a secret of the Foreign Office—namely, the proposal which the Czar had made to the British Government in January, 1853, for a partition of Turkey. The article made a great stir, and Lord Derby in the House of Lords delivered a hot attack upon *The Times* for publishing such information. Lord Aberdeen said that he had not seen the article and had no idea how *The Times* obtained the information, but suggested that it might possibly have come from an ex-clerk in the Foreign Office, whom he proceeded sufficiently to indicate.

[1] *Greville*, 1852—1860, i., 95.
[2] *Dasent*, i., 160.
[3] The *Times* on October 15 had trusted "we are not going to war at all," but had criticised a speech by Cobden as involving peace at any price.

There was no warrant for this suggestion, and *The Times*, in denying it point blank next morning, defended itself with great spirit against Lord Derby's attack :—

"This journal never was, and we trust never will be, the journal of any Minister, and we place our own independence far above the highest marks of confidence that could be given us by any servant of the Crown. The part we have the honour to take in public affairs is guided and supported by as high a sense of the honour of our profession and the interests of the country as will be met with among those who pursue in public life the distinctions of personal power or the emoluments of office. We aspire, indeed, to participate in the government of the world, but the power we seek is due to no adventitious circumstances, and is exercised solely and freely by sway of language and reason over the minds of men. Since it is our good fortune to be independent of party and fearless followers of honesty and truth, we are little moved by the railing or misrepresentations of contending statesmen. Nor have we any inducement to exchange the modest obscurity which enshrines our labours for the empty notoriety which rewards their efforts. As long as we use the information we obtain and the influence we possess for the honour and welfare of the country, the people of England will do us justice; and we are bold enough to place the duties and the power of a man, be he ever so humble, who contributes to form aright the public opinion of this nation, not far below the worth of those who have served the State with honour."

Let us hope that British journalism may never have proved entirely unworthy of such sentiments, however thrasonical the language in which they are expressed.

The debate in the House of Lords was resumed on March 17, in order that the clerk indicated by Lord Aberdeen might be vindicated. On this occasion Lord Derby laid a fresh count in the indictment. On February 27, the British Government despatched its ultimatum to Russia, and extraordinary precautions were taken to prevent disclosure. "Notwithstand-

ing," said Lord Derby, "on the next morning but one following the meeting of the Cabinet at which it was decided upon, it appeared *in extenso* in *The Times*"; [1] and, owing to some accident to the official courier, the Czar's first intimation of the ultimatum was derived from the newspaper. Lord Malmesbury reminded the House and Lord Aberdeen that "a cask may leak at the top as well as at the bottom." Lord Derby attacked Delane hard, and directed a side blow at Lord Aberdeen. "The noble Earl must forgive me for saying that neither he nor the other members of the Government should be surprised when the editor is on terms of intimacy or familiarity with more than one of them." "How is it possible," he asked, "that any honourable man, editing a public paper of such circulation as *The Times*, can reconcile to his conscience the act of having made public that which he must have known was intended to be a Cabinet secret?" Delane, who was present at the debate, replied next morning with much vehemence. How he obtained the information he never told. All he said was that it was derived not from any clandestine understanding with the Government, but from *The Times's* own resources.

"Lord Derby has even gone so far as to obtrude into the private relations of society, and to reflect upon habits of personal intercourse; but on this point we shall only remark

[1] The announcement of the ultimatum was made in the course of the leading article of February 28, 1854, in the following terms:—"The Governments of England and France have resolved to address to the Emperor of Russia a formal summons calling upon him to give within six days from the receipt of that communication a solemn promise and engagement that he will cause his troops to evacuate the principalities of the Danube on or before the 30th of April. The couriers who are the bearers of this despatch from London to Paris started on their journey yesterday morning. The refusal on the part of Russia to comply with this just demand will be regarded by the Powers as a declaration of war."

that if we have not shared in the company of Lord Derby and his associates, it has not been for want of solicitation on their part, but merely because we prefer to live with men who shape their conduct to a purer standard of sincerity and truth. To accuse this or any other journal of publishing early and correct intelligence, when there is no possibility of proving that such intelligence has been obtained by unfair or improper means, is to pay us one of the highest compliments we can hope to deserve. It is perfectly true that we keep up a considerable establishment in all the capitals of Europe for this very purpose, and that our labours in this respect are not altogether unsuccessful."

Having obtained early and correct information, Delane claimed the right of using his own judgment as to publishing or withholding it :—

"We hold ourselves responsible" (he said), "not to Lord Derby or the House of Lords, but to the people of England, for the accuracy and fitness of that which we think proper to publish. Whatever we conceive to be injurious to the public interests, it is our duty to withhold; but we ourselves and the public at large are quite as good judges on that point as the leader of the Opposition, whose object is not to serve the State, but to embarrass the Ministry, and who seems to sacrifice every consideration of public policy to the waspish pleasure of stinging an opponent."

As for the ultimatum, "we are satisfied," said Delane, "that it was useful to the public of this country and of Europe to make known, as we did, that the ultimatum of the Allied Powers was actually dispatched, since the fact has served to explain the position with respect to Russia which we have ever since occupied." He then carried the attack against his accusers :—

"Lord Derby might have extended the catalogue of our misdeeds. He might have reminded his noble friend, Lord Malmesbury, that we were not ignorant of the transactions in which they thought fit to engage with Russia, Austria and Prussia at the time of the accession of Louis Napoleon to the Imperial throne; and possibly these noble persons will

settle by which of the members or adherents of their own Administration these circumstances were brought to our cognizance. Nor was this the only occasion on which Lord Derby found in us more forbearing adversaries than he deserved, but he has forgotten the silence in which we suffered many of his actions to pass by, though he remembers, apparently with some acrimony, the hands which helped to unmask the hypocrisy of the Protectionist cause, and laboured to consign to speedy defeat and dissolution the most unworthy Administration which has ever governed England. Lord Derby failed to make the honourable portion of the Press his ally. He will fail to make it his slave, for he cannot intimidate it; and although he passes for a proud man among his peers, he will meet with at least an equal amount of pride and independence in the ranks of those journals which he has idly attacked and unjustly accused."

The dispute raises questions of large interest to the public and to journalists about which something must be said later (pp. 276—279).

Delane, during the months preceding the outbreak of hostilities, had shown himself to be of the old opinion—which has sometimes been the cloak of provocative aggression and sometimes a counsel of true prudence—that if you wish for peace, you must be ready for war. He was on very friendly terms with Lord Hardinge, the Commander-in-Chief, who wrote and talked to him about the inadequacy of preparations and forces in the event of war, and Delane had for some time spoken out boldly on the subject. He was much abused, as we shall hear presently, for his exposure of the lack of adequate preparedness for the war; he had this justification, among others, that he had done everything in his power to rouse England the Unready beforehand.

What Delane preached as the duty of the nation, he practised in regard to his own paper. The outbreak of war found *The Times* well equipped with a

staff of correspondents, and Delane's foresight opened a new page in the history of journalism. In 1852 a man of brilliant parts had made a tour in Russia, in the course of which he penetrated to the Crimea and noted the military and naval strength of Russia. At the end of 1853 he published an account of his travels, and an early copy of the book—Laurence Oliphant's "Russian Shores of the Black Sea"—came by good fortune under Delane's own notice. It was probably the reading of this book that convinced him, a little later, of the importance of striking a blow at Sebastopol.[1] Meanwhile he had the book reviewed at great length in *The Times*, sought the acquaintance of the writer, and gave him an appointment as a special correspondent of the paper. In this capacity Oliphant described the Trans-Caucasian campaign under Omar Pasha. When war became imminent, Thomas Chenery, destined to succeed Delane as editor, was sent out to replace the too Turkish correspondent at Constantinople; his letters thence attracted much attention, and he sometimes went to the front to relieve his colleague. Another correspondent who did notable service was William Henry Stowe, a Fellow of Oriel. He acted both as almoner and as war correspondent, and fell a victim to camp fever at Balaclava. A correspondent of a very different type was General Eber, a Hungarian patriot of 1848, who had settled in England and was a favourite in the best society. He combined the parts of correspondent and fighting man, becoming chief of Omar's staff during the campaign in Thessaly; but he served *The Times* in the Crimea also. "My God, wasn't it an awful day?" exclaimed one of his colleagues after

[1] See below, p. 78.

Inkerman. "Awful," replied Eber, "no; it was a most beaudiful day; fine baddle as ever vos." [1] Eber afterwards fought with Garibaldi in Italy, acting simultaneously as *The Times* correspondent, and for many years he served the paper at Vienna. He and Delane were great friends, and often travelled together. Another, and one of the happiest, of Delane's appointments was destined to play a considerable, and even a crucial, part in the conduct of the war. On June 26, 1854, when the Russians had been compelled to raise the siege of Silistria and the Allies were saved thereby from a campaign amidst the marshes of the Danube, Lord Hardinge wrote to tell Delane that he was about to promote two English officers who had distinguished themselves at that place—Captain James Armar Butler and Lieutenant Charles Nasmyth. "Who is your military correspondent there?" asked the Commander-in-Chief. "I hope one of them." He was Nasmyth, a young and untried officer in the East India Company's service, whom Delane had sent as correspondent. He, with Butler, was the life and soul of the Turkish defence; and "the lustre of his achievement," says Kinglake, "was in some degree shed on the keen and watchful company which had the foresight to send him into the midst of events on which the fate of Russia was hanging; for whilst the State armies of France and England were as yet only gathering their strength, *The Times* was able to say that its own officer had confronted the enemy upon the very ground he most needed to win, and helped to drive him back from the Danube in great discomfiture." [2] But Delane's best piece of fortune, the stroke of good

[1] *Atkins*, i., 171.
[2] *Kinglake*, ii., 245.

judgment from which he derived the greatest reward, was the appointment of an Irishman, William Howard Russell, to be his principal war correspondent. Russell had been connected with *The Times*, off and on, as we have already heard, since 1841, and had seen something of war during the Schleswig-Holstein campaign against the Danes in 1850. His energy, vivacity, and personal charm had impressed Delane, who, as soon as war became imminent, sent him out to be *The Times* correspondent with the main British force in the East. Russell was already on his way thither when the declaration of war was made; he landed at Gallipoli on April 5, 1854, and within a few days was already predicting the sufferings which were in store for the army, so terribly inadequate did he find the commissariat and medical departments to be. A phrase which Russell applied to the English infantry at Balaclava—"the thin red line"—has passed into the language. His fearless exposure of sufferings and mismanagement "saved the remnant of an army," inspired the mission of Florence Nightingale, and overthrew the Ministry of Lord Aberdeen.

Such was the varied and brilliant staff which Delane had under his command during the Crimean war. With that war the name and fame of Sir William Russell will always be associated. No man could have done what he did without his stout moral courage, his depth of sincere feeling, his command of vigorous language, and the winning way with him, which made friends wherever he went, opened doors otherwise closed, and served to extricate him from many an almost impossible difficulty. These gifts were Russell's own, and they were of incalculable benefit to the paper he served. The war corre-

spondent, it must be remembered, had in those days no recognised status. The fame which Russell attained was won, the national service which he rendered was done by him merely as a camp-follower, treated sometimes with less consideration than was shown to the T. G.'s, for so the army called the "travelling gentlemen" who came out to the front. In such circumstances almost everything depended on the personal appeal made by the correspondent to those among whom his lot was cast. Kinglake, who as a T. G. himself met Russell at the front, admits us to some of the correspondent's secrets. His opportunity of gathering intelligence depended in great measure upon communications which might be made to him by officers of their own free will. Russell was so socially gifted that he evoked conversation. He was an Irish humourist, "whose very tones fetched a laugh. If only he shouted 'Virgilio'—Virgilio was one of his servants—the sound when heard through the canvas used often to send divine mirth into more than one neighbouring tent; and whenever in solemn accents he owned the dread uniform he wore to be that of the late 'disembodied militia' one used to think nothing more comic could ever be found in creation than his 'rendering' of a 'live Irish ghost.'" [1] So popular did his tent become as a rendezvous for a smoke or a chat that he had to put up a notice: "Mr. Russell requests that he may not be interrupted except upon business." [2] He had moreover abundant sagacity and a shrewdly observing eye; he could seize the significance of anything he saw or heard with rare accuracy, and knew how to use his materials with

[1] *Kinglake*, vii., 210.
[2] *Atkins*, i., 188.

the skill of a powerful writer. *The Times* thus owed very much to the personality and talents of its correspondent; but, on the other hand, his work could never have attained its actual effect without the inspiration, the encouragement, the unfailing support which it received from the editor in London. In some ways Russell suffered in the Crimea—as later he suffered more seriously during the American Civil War—from a confusion in men's minds between the correspondent and the leader-writer. He was held responsible for all the comments which the editor based upon the letters. Yet the letters could never have made the mark they did if Delane had not had the courage to print them as they were written and to drive the point of them home into the public mind through his editorial columns. Kinglake, in his account of the matter, published after Delane's death,[1] while holding *The Times* guilty of grave indiscretion, blamed Delane rather than Russell. He hoped that Russell would not be offended by what he had written. Russell acknowledged gratefully the friendliness of Kinglake's references, but added with characteristic loyalty: "I shall ever retain for Delane the deepest affection." [2]

Delane's information with regard to the war was by no means confined to the printed letters of his official correspondents. Just as an ambassador writes to the Secretary of State privately in addition to official despatches, so Delane's agents at the front sent him private letters distinct from their correspondence intended for publication. He had private correspondents also among those in high command—

[1] In his seventh volume, 1880.
[2] *Atkins*, i., 228.

such as Sir Charles Napier in the Baltic, and General Sir George De Lacy Evans in the Crimea. But neither in peace nor in war did Delane ever allow himself to be diverted from what he deemed a public duty by the claims of personal friendship or by "consideration received" in the form of private information. His "well-known friendship" with Lord Aberdeen did not prevent him from being an instrument of that Minister's overthrow. His friendship with Sir Charles Napier and the confidences which the admiral imparted to him did not prevent him from censuring the conduct of the campaign in the Baltic.[1]

The part which Delane played in the Crimean war was not limited, however, to criticism, nor did he confine himself to information, however good, at second hand. The first phase of the war was a campaign on the Danube, and the allied troops were collected around Varna. No decisive result was obtained, and Delane came out with a policy of positive suggestion. One of the best known, though not of the most accurate, passages in Kinglake's History is his picture of the Cabinet slumbering on June 28, 1854, whilst the Duke of Newcastle read out the dispatch which ordered the invasion of the Crimea. The project had, however, been before the Cabinet for several days. The credit, or the blame, of first suggesting the invasion has been ascribed to various persons besides Delane—to the Emperor Napoleon, to Lord Palmerston, to the Duke of Newcastle. What is certain is that on the morning of

[1] Delane sent a very outspoken letter to the admiral on October 4, 1854, telling him how severely he was being criticised at home and urging him to "strike a blow worthy of your once great reputation" (*Yodrell*, p. 8).

June 15 *The Times* declared as follows: that "the grand political and military objects of the war could not be attained as long as Sebastopol and the Russian fleet were in existence"; but that "if that central position of the Russian power in the south were annihilated, the whole fabric, which had cost the Czars of Russia centuries to raise, must fall to the ground"; that "the taking of Sebastopol and the occupation of the Crimea were objects which would repay all the costs of the war, and would permanently settle in our favour the principal questions in dispute"; and that "it was equally clear that those objects were to be accomplished by no other means—because a peace which should leave Russia in possession of the same means of aggression would only enable her to recommence the war at her pleasure." Any one who reads this article, and then refers to the Memorandum [1] which Palmerston circulated to the Cabinet on the same day, will see how clearly two men reached on similar grounds the same conclusion. It is possible, of course, that *The Times* article was inspired, directly or indirectly, by Palmerston; but I have found no evidence of this, and Delane's personal intimacy with Palmerston began, I believe, somewhat later. However this may be, *The Times* was first in the open with the suggestion; "before the seventh day from the manifesto, the country had made loud answer to the appeal"; some of the Ministers had qualms; but on June 22 the great newspaper, "informed with the deep will of the people," laid it down in peremptory terms that "Sebastopol was the keystone of the arch which spanned the Euxine from the mouths of the Danube to the confines of Mingrelia," and that "a

[1] It is given in *Ashley*, ii., 295.

successful enterprise against the place was the essential condition of permanent peace." Six days later the Cabinet ordered the invasion. The public saw once more that what *The Times* said to-day came to pass to-morrow.

Having had his strategy adopted, and receiving from Russell the most depressing tales of disorganisation and delay, Delane resolved to proceed to the seat of war and to see things with his own eyes. He left for the East in August, being accompanied on his tour by Kinglake and Layard. He went first to Vienna, where he saw Count Buol, the Austrian Minister, from whom he learnt diplomatic news which he telegraphed home to his paper. He then went by Trieste, Corfu, and Athens to Constantinople, where he dined with Lord Stratford de Redcliffe and formed a poor opinion of the tone of the Embassy. He told Lord Stratford that if our army were to perish before Sebastopol, the first thought of the nation at home would be to raise another.[1] From Constantinople Delane took ship for the Crimea, where he witnessed the disembarcation of the troops. He missed the battle of the Alma by a few days and was back in London at the beginning of October. This tour of inspection by Delane was of great importance. He saw all his correspondents, who knew henceforth that the chief would scan their reports at once with a more critical and with a more understanding eye. He made the acquaintance of many of the commanders on sea and land. He was able to form personal impressions of their several capacities. Above all, he saw with his own eyes both the spirit of the troops and the defects of the military organisation. What he had

[1] *Dasent*, i., 185.

seen sharpened the edge of his pen. "The absence of medical stores and comforts," he wrote shortly after his return, "which was deplorable before I left, is at last explained. They had all been sent to Varna, while the sick and wounded were sent to Constantinople. This little bureaucratic blunder has cost at least 500 lives, but the Government which denied that there was any want of stores will now, of course, maintain that it was in pursuance of a wise and far-seeing policy that the medicines and the sick, the lint and the wounded, were kept 300 miles apart." [1]

During the terrible Crimean winter, 1854–1855, *The Times* was ruthlessly outspoken in exposing the sufferings of the troops; in criticising the shortcomings alike of the authorities at home and of the commanders in the field; in pressing for greater vigour and for the despatch of reinforcements. At the very beginning of the war Russell wrote to Delane: "Am I to tell these things or hold my tongue?" It was "one of those casual exclamations," says Russell's biographer, "which mark a crisis in a man's life." [2] It was an exclamation rather than a question. Russell, moved by pity and indignation, did not wait, and had no need to wait, for his editor's answer. All Delane's correspondents were instructed to tell the truth without fear or favour. "Publicity," he used to say, "is my trade"; adding, "Details the public wants and details it shall have." Delane and Russell gave them; the effect produced was great, and the credit, or discredit, of the revelations attached almost entirely to

[1] To Monckton Milnes, October 23, 1854 (*Reid*, i., 500). The same letter states that part of *The Times*' account of the battle of the Alma was written by Kinglake, and gives an interesting description of the conditions in which Russell did his work.

[2] *Aitkins*, i., 139.

The Times. The opportunity which Russell had was unique. Since the days of the Crimean war we have seen the business of war correspondence run its full course and sink perhaps into comparative insignificance. Owing to the vastly increased range of modern weapons and extended sphere of military operations, on the one hand, and owing, on the other, to the extreme severity of the censorship, the opportunities even of the most enterprising correspondents are greatly restricted. All are placed very much in the same position—a position generally in the rear of actual operations; and, except when enterprise takes the form of fiction, the correspondent becomes, so far as any immediate publication is concerned, little more than an official chronicler. He may still, on rare occasion, make a stir, but only as saying what some person or persons in authority or command desire, or do not object, to have said. Russell's position was entirely different. He was free to say whatever he liked, and what those in authority and command disliked. The special war-correspondent was a new invention, and the check of a censorship had not kept pace with it. The Crimean war was the first in which newspaper correspondents—called by Lord Wolseley "the curse of modern armies"—were in the field; Lord Raglan and his immediate successors were the first, and last, commanders to conduct a campaign under the unchecked criticism of unofficial eye-witnesses. The correspondents, as I have already explained, were given no recognised status; they had to trust to their own wits, luck and daring, to maintain their position; but their proceedings and correspondence were otherwise unfettered. This journalistic enterprise which in later days was

spread over a dozen newspapers or more was then largely concentrated in *The Times*, whose resources and prestige out-distanced all competitors. Russell's letters were even more easily first than were those of Archibald Forbes of the *Daily News* in a later war. What the British public knew about the state of things at the seat of war was what Russell and Delane told them.

When these reports had caused all England to ring with indignation at the sorry plight of the troops and at the miscalculation of the authorities, Delane was accused of proclaiming and magnifying these things in order to make a journalistic sensation. Greville, who had a foot in two camps, who liked to keep in with *The Times*, but who, though in some respects a Radical, was deeply committed to the governing classes, was in a state of terrible fluster. He records "a great battle with Delane," and takes credit to himself for having influenced the editor on at least one occasion.[1] In other places he is full of impotent railings against "the clamour and diatribes" of his friend. "*The Times* goes on against Raglan with greater vehemence every day, and will not be restrained by any remonstrances."[2] "The Press, with *The Times* at its head, is striving to throw everything into confusion, and running a-muck against the aristocratic element of society and of the Constitution. . . . [The people] are told that it is not this or that Minister who can restore our affairs, but a change in the whole system of government, and the substitution of plebeians and new men for the leaders of parties and members of aristocratic families, of whom all

[1] November 26, 1854 (*Greville*, i., 202).
[2] *Greville*, i., 219.

Governments have been for the most part composed. What effect these revolutionary doctrines may have on the opinions of the people at large remains to be seen; but it is evident that *The Times*, their great propagator, thinks them popular and generally acceptable, or they would not have plunged into that course." [1] The effect which the articles produced on people at large was shown clearly enough in due course. Delane carried the day; but Greville was not alone in his disgusted alarm. Ministers (or some of them), the commanders, the Court were all perturbed by the freedom of speech in which *The Times* and its correspondent indulged. The Queen wanted to know by what right the editor of *The Times* tried her officers,[2] and the Prince Consort called Russell a "miserable scribbler." [3] Sidney Herbert trusted that the army would "lynch *The Times* correspondent." [4] Lord Clarendon, who had by this time succeeded Lord John Russell at the Foreign Office, was "in despair at the doings of *The Times*. Three pitched battles gained would not repair the mischief done by Mr. Russell and the articles upon his letters." The audacious paper actually declined to "throw a veil over our shortcomings." [5] This line of objection, very natural in a Minister, was taken also, and with greater reason, by the Commander at the front. Lord Raglan complained to the Secretary of State that the disclosures made in Russell's letters "must be invaluable to the Russians and in the same degree detrimental to H.M.'s troops." [6] Kinglake, whose history

[1] *Greville*, i., 243, 244.
[2] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, iii., 221.
[3] *Atkins*, i., 224.
[4] Lord Stanmore's "Sidney Herbert," ii., 3.
[5] *Maxwell*, ii., 100—101.
[6] *Kinglake*, vii., 451.

of the Crimean war is conceived as an epic with Lord Raglan for Achilles, accepts all these severe judgments, and casts *The Times* for the part of Thersites. Are the judgments correct? The question requires careful scrutiny.

That both Russell and Delane committed indiscretions will hardly be disputed by any one who reads Lord Raglan's letters of complaint.[1] Russell stated on occasion where the enemy's shot fell, and what damage it did; that a certain division had taken the place of another; what the resources of the Allies in guns and ammunition were, and so forth. The plea, usually set up in defence of such disclosure of facts, is that the enemy probably knew them already or might ascertain them from other sources. The defence is bad. The sound rule of censorship is not to pass everything of military value which the enemy may possibly find out otherwise, but to stop everything which he may possibly not otherwise find out. It is sometimes urged that, whatever a correspondent at the front may say, the editor at home can be trusted implicitly to act as his own censor. It was not so during the Crimean war. Russell in one despatch named a particular windmill as being used by the Allies for a powder-magazine. He supposed, like everyone else at the front at the time, that Sebastopol would have fallen before his letter could be published; but this excuse, insufficient even in Russell's case, is of no avail for Delane, who should certainly have struck out the passage. The curious thing is that neither at home nor at the front was the idea of a censorship entertained. Russell offered to submit his letters to examination at headquarters before they

[1] Printed in *Kinglake*, vii., 450—452.

were posted, but the offer was not accepted. At home the Duke of Newcastle, after the receipt of one of Lord Raglan's complaints, communicated privately with the principal newspaper editors. How far Russell's letters were thereafter subjected to closer editorial supervision we have no means of knowing. Certainly, however, Delane was no more ready than before to "throw a veil over our shortcomings." His articles were often neither judicious nor fair. The attacks on Lord Raglan, begun by Russell and driven home by Delane,[1] were often ungenerous and sometimes ill-informed. The estimate given in *The Times* of the state of the army and its prospects was overcoloured. Any notion that *The Times* in those mid-Victorian days was always sedate, pompous or measured in its language, is far removed from the truth; how far, may be gathered in a moment by any one who cares to turn to the page or two in which Kinglake has strung together a collection of extracts anything but elegant. It is probable that the exaggerated strains in which the leading English journal "chanted our dirge" did, as Kinglake maintains, give aid and comfort to the enemy.

The part played by Russell and Delane must, however, be judged as a whole. Delane held that in the circumstances publicity was the necessary cure. There was, as I have explained, no censorship; and the question is whether more harm or good was done by Russell's disclosures and Delane's thunders. The letters of the first of war correspondents did now and then disclose military information to the enemy; but a high military authority has maintained that "by

[1] See Russell to Delane, November 8, 1854, and Delane to Russell, January 4, 1855, in *Atkins*, i., 173, 186.

telling the story of our men's sufferings to the public Russell saved the remnant of our army." "Custom," says Sir Evelyn Wood, "and an acquired sentiment of reticence under privations, tied the tongues and pens of our chiefs. William Howard Russell dared to tell his employers, and through them the English-speaking peoples, that our little army was perishing from want of proper food and clothing. He probably made mistakes, as his statements, often hurriedly written, were necessarily based on incomplete information. He incurred much enmity, but few unprejudiced men who were in the Crimea will now attempt to call in question the fact that by awakening the conscience of the British nation to the sufferings of its troops, he saved the remnant of those grand battalions we landed in September." [1] And so, too, with regard to the leading articles in *The Times*. If they were often over-violent, often also they were just and forcible. "No more able, more cogent appeals were perhaps ever made," says Kinglake, "than those in which its great writers insisted again and again that the despatch of reinforcements must be achieved with an exertion of will strong enough to overthrow every obstacle interposed by mere customs and forms. When the story of Inkerman reached them, they uttered, if so one may speak, the very soul of a nation. . . . And, again, when a few days later, the further accounts from our army showed the darkening of the prospect before it, the great journal, using its leadership, and moving out to the front with opportune, resolute counsels, seemed clothed with a power to speak, nay, almost one may say, to act, in the

[1] *Atkins*, i., 257. A similar opinion by Admiral Sir Robert Mends may be found in the same place.

name of a united people. During nearly five weeks *The Times* used its strength in the spirit of a Patriot King." [1] Let us hope that every influential journal in our country will always, to the measure of its opportunity, be worthy of so stirring a panegyric. Kinglake thought, however, that even Delane afterwards fell from this high estate, that in the later diatribes of *The Times* the Patriot King was swamped in the Sensation-mongering Journalist; and that, had the editor been still alive when the seventh volume of the "Invasion of the Crimea" was published, he would in his own sober judgment have stood self-rebuked. Delane, I am sure, would never have kissed the rod of his candid friend; and there is something more, I think, which may rightly be urged in his vindication.

A journalist who adopts what are called sensational methods is naturally suspect. They are methods which are sometimes profitable to the journal, and they are not the only methods by which a journalist of influence can bring weight to bear upon the course of affairs.[2] If he adopt the noisier way, with incidental disadvantage to the public interests, when another and quieter would or might have attained the same end, he must expect to find his motives questioned: the Patriot King is likely to be accounted by many, whether rightly or wrongly, as rather a King of *Réclame*. From this point of view Delane has a clean record. If he did not keep things back from

[1] *Kinglake*, vii., 203.

[2] The late Mr. Frederick Greenwood's part in suggesting the purchase of the Suez Canal shares by the British Government is sometimes cited as one of the triumphs of modern English journalism; but the remarkable thing about that far-sighted stroke by a great journalist is that it was played not in any journalistic way, but quietly and behind the scenes.

the public, neither did he reserve the facts for public use only. "Your private letters to me," he had written to Russell early in the war,[1] "have made the round of the Cabinet." And similarly after Delane's return from the Crimea, what *The Times* said in public the editor had already said to Ministers privately. His native shrewdness, combined with all that he had learnt from well-informed persons on the spot, convinced him that Sebastopol would not fall at the first assault. He tried, in a personal interview, to convince the Duke of Newcastle that a winter campaign was probable; he urged the supreme importance of making preparations for it; he suggested the provision of wooden huts for the troops, pointing out that these might be made both cheaply and quickly at Constantinople. He was not merely critical. His paper was actively helpful. He was a pioneer in the journalism which does things as well as says things. *The Times* organised a fund for providing comforts for the sick and wounded. Mr. MacDonald, a member of *The Times* staff, was sent out to superintend its distribution, and Lord Sydney Godolphin Osborne volunteered his services in the same cause. How greatly Delane's fund contributed to the success of Miss Nightingale's work has been told by the present writer elsewhere.[2] According to the official view, "nothing was needed," and Lord Stratford suggested that *The Times* should devote its fund to an English church at Pera. In fact it was soon found to be needed for the supply of linen, utensils, clothing, and various hospital comforts. There was a like miscalculation at the War Office.

[1] July 20, 1854 (*Atkins*, i., 146).
[2] "Life of Florence Nightingale," i., 165, 196, 199, 201.

The Duke of Newcastle listened to Delane's private representations, but heeded them not. When Delane spoke out, he spoke not as a mere journalist catering for curious appetites, but as a public man more than ever convinced that the best, perhaps the only, cure for incompetence and mismanagement was publicity. To apply a remedy, to form a sound judgment, it was necessary, he held, to let the facts be generally known. He acted remorselessly, and sometimes unwisely, on this prescription. The Crimean war belongs to the period of the Whig oligarchy, when the governing class required a good deal of battering to move them. Delane's diatribes were at any rate aimed at definite, attainable objects, and they were attained. He wanted to see greater vigour infused into the command at the front. He held that the defects in organisation and resource which the earlier stages of the war had disclosed could best be remedied by some change of *personnel* at home. Russell's letters, with the conclusions which Delane drew from them, did in fact destroy a Ministry, and thereby impart new vigour to the conduct of the war.

On January 23, 1855, Mr. Roebuck gave notice of his famous motion for a Select Committee "To enquire into the condition of our Army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those Departments of the Government whose duty it has been to minister to the wants of that Army." The Ministry was already toppling, and before the motion came on Lord John Russell resigned—playing, said Delane, the part of a general who, refusing an action in the presence of the enemy, throws down his truncheon and quits the field.[1] Mr. Roebuck's motion was carried, and the

[1] Leading article, January 26, 1855.

Government of Lord Aberdeen resigned. Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister, and Lord Panmure succeeded the Duke of Newcastle as Secretary of War. Lord Aberdeen's principal Peelite colleagues—Gladstone, Graham, and Sidney Herbert—took office under Lord Palmerston, but resigned presently when the new Government had decided to press home the inquiry into the conduct of the war. In these events, Delane, "inspiring our people whilst itself by our people inspired," played an important part. Hitherto he had been, as we have seen, a strong opponent of Lord Palmerston; but he recognised that his old opponent was the strong man marked out by public opinion for the new situation. He contended that the new Government would be strengthened by the withdrawal of Mr. Gladstone and the others. Above all he continued to press for searching inquiry into the conduct of the war and for measures calculated to secure better system and greater vigour. At the end of September, 1855, Delane took a holiday of a few weeks in Switzerland, and the paper in his absence was as outspoken as ever, and more violent. At this time a dispute with Delane's assistant led Reeve to break with *The Times*, and Lord Clarendon congratulated him on being quit of such a connexion. "Great irresponsible power was never more abused; it is despotism committing high treason every day with impunity." [1] On his return the despot went to see the Foreign Secretary. "Delane was here an immense time," wrote Lord Clarendon to his wife—"rather *mou* and humble. I did not spare his infernal paper, and I must say he did not attempt to defend anything that was done during his absence, which was

[1] *Maxwell*, ii., 101.

the time when it ran a-muck at all men and things. Among my complaints was the article in abuse of Simpson.[1] This he told me was Reeve's, so I think he is as well out of *The Times* as in it!"[2] Delane could be soft and diplomatic it seems, in presence of a diplomat. In fact he had supported the line taken by his deputy, though, no doubt, he would have worded many things differently had he been in command at the time. Ministers might growl at Delane's despotism, but they obeyed it. Lord Panmure became, in Kinglake's words, "a humble subordinate of *The Times*." "He received his marching orders submissively, proceeded at once to obey them, and so trudged doggedly on, without giving other vent to his savageness than a comfortable oath and a growl. What *The Times* had been enjoining he made it his first duty to do. What *The Times* had asserted he held must be taken as true until the contrary were shown."[3] Lord Panmure's predecessor had by this time kissed the rod, though at first he had been very sore. *The Times*, he said, was "ruffianly," and when the Roebuck motion came on he suspected that there had been traitors in the Cabinet who had inspired, or conspired with, the ruffian. The Duke of Newcastle accused Lord Granville of being unduly intimate with Delane, and Lord Granville circulated a Memorandum among his colleagues in self-defence.[4] But when the blow had fallen, the Duke went out as a private Travelling Gentleman to the Crimea, where he met *The Times* correspondent and made friends. "It

[1] October 4, 1855. General Simpson succeeded to the command, in right of seniority, upon the death of Lord Raglan (June 28).

[2] *Maxwell*, ii., 103.

[3] *Kinglake*, vii., 291.

[4] This curious piece, to which I refer later in another connexion (p. 271), is printed by Lord Fitzmaurice, i., 91—92. See also above, p. 13.

was you who turned out the Government, Mr. Russell," [1] he said, as they rode together on Cathcart's Hill.

Such was the part played by *The Times* in the Crimean war. It called forth from Lord John Russell, in 1855, some characteristic outbursts. "Your friend, Mr. Delane," he said to Lord Granville, "seems to be drunk with insolence and vanity"; and to Lord Clarendon, "*The Times* aspires not to be the organ but the organiser of Government." [2]

[1] *Atkins*, i., 200.

[2] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 419, 420. Mr. Meredith, who cannot have seen Lord John's words, showed insight when, in his sketch of Delane, he put precisely the same complaint into the mouth of another statesman. "Dacier had admitted to Diana that Tonans merited the thanks of the country during the discreditable Railway mania, when his articles had a fine exhortative and prophetic twang, and had done marked good. Otherwise, as regarded the Ministry, the veering gusts of Tonans were objectionable . . . he frequently intruded on the Ministry's prerogative to govern. The journalist was bidding against the statesman. But such is the condition of a rapidly Radicalizing country! We must take it as it is" ("Diana of the Crossways," chap. xxxiii.).

CHAPTER V

ALLIANCE WITH PALMERSTON: FOREIGN AFFAIRS (1855–1865).

"*The Times* is one of the greatest powers in the world; in fact, I don't know anything which has more power, except perhaps the Mississippi."—ABRAHAM LINCOLN (1861).

"I THOUGHT very much of you," wrote Lord Torrington to Delane, in describing Palmerston's funeral, "on the day of the great manifestation which took place and the respect shown to his memory. It recalled to my mind what was his position and popularity till *you* gave him aid and support! In fact *but for you* he would have died almost as unnoticed as I should be, and possibly quite as little regretted. *You* made the show of last Friday, and carried him in triumph through the last dozen years of his life!"[1] Behind a note of friendly exaggeration there is an undercurrent of substantial truth in this estimate of the service rendered by the editor to the Minister. Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister on February 22, 1855, and, except for the short interval of the Derby Administration (February 28, 1858—June, 1859), he held that place with a fuller measure of power than belongs to most Prime Ministers until his death on October 18, 1865. During those years Palmerston was the great star in the political firmament, and Delane was his prophet. The secret of the Prime Minister's power lay in the exact corre-

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 151.

spondence of his character, talents, and policy with the opinions and feelings of the middle classes at the time. Theirs was the public opinion which then governed the nation; and of that opinion Delane of *The Times* was the organ.

Already in January, 1855, when the Aberdeen Government was seen to be crumbling, Delane had pointed to Lord Palmerston as the indispensable man. If the Government survived, it could only be by appointing him to the War Office; if it was defeated, "we can hardly doubt," said *The Times*, "that Lord Palmerston will be called on to recompose the Cabinet." [1] Delane presently made Palmerston's acquaintance, and this speedily ripened into intimacy and friendship. The editor was always to be seen at Lady Palmerston's parties. He communicated with the Prime Minister almost daily. He stayed at Broadlands. If either the editor or the Minister were laid up, when important affairs were in progress, the communications would be by letter. A memorandum had been printed in which, when peace preliminaries were being discussed in January, 1856, and Delane was kept in bed by serious illness, the Prime Minister sent to him a succinct account of the negotiations.[2] People supposed that Delane received all his information from the fountain-head, but this was by no means the case. It was part of his secret that he was often able to give Ministers information. The matter just mentioned affords an instance in point. The question was whether Russia would or would not accept the terms then known as the Four Points of Vienna. She had till January 18 to decide. Palmerston in his

[1] Leading article, January 29, 1855.
[2] See *Dasent*, i., 228.

memorandum to Delane of the 16th was not sure what the Russian answer would be. On the afternoon of the next day Palmerston sent a note to Delane saying that the terms had been accepted; but before the letter arrived a special edition of *The Times* was already on the streets with the news. Delane had received it, in advance of the Government, from a confidential correspondent at Vienna. During the Peace Conference which followed Delane was similarly often in receipt of early information through the good offices of Greville, who was in Paris at the time. With Lord Clarendon, the principal British plenipotentiary, and with Lord Granville, another of Lord Palmerston's colleagues, Delane was on terms only less confidential than with the Prime Minister himself.

The support which *The Times* now gave to Lord Palmerston was the more piquant because in former days it had been his bitter opponent. Political gossips and even responsible statesmen wondered what the change meant, and after the way of the world in proportion as reasons suggested were more recondite and less reputable the more readily did they find acceptance. In a once famous speech, made at Slough in 1858, Disraeli accused the Whig aristocracy of "corrupting the once pure and independent Press of England." "Innocent people in the country," he said, "who look to the leading articles in the newspapers for advice and direction, who look to what are called leading organs to be the guardians of their privileges and the directors of their political consciences, are not the least aware, because this sort of knowledge travels slowly, that leading organs now are place-hunters of the Court, and that the once stern guardians of popular rights simper in

the enervating atmosphere of gilded saloons." This was Disraeli's way of alluding to the presence of his old friend Delane at Lady Palmerston's receptions, and no one except innocent people in the country need have taken it seriously. One of the Whig aristocrats, however, in a moment of spleen gave, apparently in all seriousness, a comically childish account of Delane's conversion to Lord Palmerston's side. In earlier days, said Lord John Russell, "when P. was at the Foreign Office, especially during the Pacifico business, *The Times* fired at him six times a week and Palmerston burnt it. It all ended in Reeve going to Palmerston to announce that the hostility of *The Times* was over, and to ask that Mrs. Reeve might be invited to Lady Palmerston's parties. This Palmerston told me himself." Apparently the invitations were given, for "Palmerston," added Lord John, "constantly saw Delane, and *The Times* was of great use to him." [1] That Lord Palmerston may have said something colourably like Lord John's recollection is likely enough; [2] it would be in keeping with his breezy way of brushing aside an unwelcome discussion. What Lord John said that Palmerston said that Mr. Reeve said would not, however, be evidence even against the last named, and still less against Delane; but a man who could believe that an editor like Delane would change the course of his paper in return for an invitation to the wife of one of

[1] *Maxwell*, ii., 314. According to Mr. Escott it was Lady Molesworth who brought Palmerston and Delane together at a series of little dinners ("Masters of English Journalism," p. 326).

[2] That there may have been some foundation so far as Reeve is concerned is suggested by a note in his diary (1850). "After the Greek fight, Fleming made the peace between the Palmerstons and me. I was introduced to Lady P. at Lady Shelburne's concert on July 24th, and went to Lady P.'s party on August 3rd for the first time" (*Laughton*, i., 230).

his leader-writers is capable of believing anything. Moreover, Mr. Reeve had severed his connexion with *The Times* very shortly after the alliance with Palmerston was formed.

Disraeli in banter and Lord John Russell in pique were not alone, however, in attributing something sinister to the alliance. Mr. Horsman, who in 1857 had resigned a post in Lord Palmerston's Administration, attacked both the Minister and the editor in 1860, and there was a lively debate on the subject in the House of Commons. Mr. Horsman's point of departure was curious. Mr. Walter had made a speech in the House suggesting that the passage of a Reform Bill, then before it, would probably be facilitated if reform were dissociated from an immediate dissolution. The argument seems innocent enough; but Mr. Horsman saw in it a wicked aspersion on the honour of the House. Here was a speaker daring to insinuate that the votes of honourable members might be actuated by thoughts about the safety or otherwise of their seats! It was flat treason! And the deed was the darker because what Mr. Walter spoke one day had been written the day before in the paper of which he was the principal proprietor. Mr. Walter explained that he had not written or inspired, or indeed had anything whatever to do with, the article. He had only done, I imagine, what other honest gentlemen before and after him have done—namely, gone to his newspaper to find points for a speech in the House. But Mr. Horsman scented a dangerous conspiracy. He accused Mr. Walter of paying "muffled" and "midnight depredators" to "plant daggers" in the very heart of an immaculate House of Commons. "I have no time,"

he added, "to remark on the personal influences by which *The Times* is supposed to be affected; on the peculiar influences that draw Mr. Delane to Lord Palmerston; and the anomalous position and proceedings of Mr. Lowe on the Treasury Bench." [1] This remark brought Lord Palmerston to his feet. If Mr. Horsman meant to imply an ability on the Prime Minister's part to exercise any influence over the conduct and opinions of *The Times* he only wished he could plead guilty to the soft impeachment; but as a matter of fact, "if there are any influences which have fortunately led Mr. Delane to me, they are none other than the influences of society."

The real explanation of Delane's alliance with Palmerston, if less entertaining than those invented by gossip, is of more serious interest. When Delane first became editor of *The Times* he was a very young man. His first political mentor among leading statesmen was Lord Aberdeen. From the conversation and confidence of that Minister he had derived much political teaching, and often—as in the famous Corn Law *coup*—professional advantage. He warmly supported Lord Aberdeen, as we have seen, in forming the Coalition Government of 1852; and after its fall continued to enjoy his friendship. Delane visited him at Haddo shortly before his death. Delane's biographer tells us that of all the Prime Ministers with whom his uncle was associated Lord Aberdeen was the one whom he most respected, and the terms of the obituary article in *The Times* (December 15, 1860) were as warm as they were judicious. Lord Aber-

[1] *Hansard*, May 7, 1860. Mr. Lowe, who at this time was Vice-President of the Council on Education, was a leader-writer for *The Times* from 1851 to 1868.

deen, it said, "belonged to that class of statesmen who are great without being brilliant, who succeed without ambition, who without eloquence become famous, who retain their power even when deprived of place. He denied that his vocation was politics, but his friends knew him better; they appreciated his clear head, his tolerant nature, his vast experience and his perfect integrity." But if Lord Aberdeen was the Prime Minister whom Delane most respected, Lord Palmerston was the one with whom, in the process of events and as his own character and opinions developed, he came to feel the greatest sympathy. The course of the Crimean war, already traced, pointed to Lord Palmerston as the coming man, and Delane put himself at the head of public opinion in that sense. The line which Lord Palmerston took in following up the Roebuck inquiry was naturally pleasing to the editor who had led the movement of public opinion in favour of it. The Minister who by no means affected Lord John Russell's superior airs towards the Press was fully conscious of the advantages to be derived from the support of the paper which was the organ of the very classes to whom he appealed. He opened himself freely to Delane, and the confidences became closer and more free when it was found that they were not abused. He gave Delane much information for guidance or direct use; he knew that he could trust the editor also, when begging him on public grounds to keep silence on matters which might reach him from other sources.[1] He came to like Delane personally, and Delane liked him. They were thoroughly sympathetic to each other. In tastes, in character, in fundamental

[1] For an instance (during the Indian Mutiny), see *Dasent* i., 265.

opinions there was much resemblance between them. They were out-of-door men, though both were also great workers. Lord Palmerston told the House of Commons, as noted above, that the tie between himself and the editor was social:—

"I have had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Delane frequently in society, and he has occasionally done me the honour to join in society under my roof; that society was, I may add, composed of persons of all shades of politics and of various pursuits. I need hardly say I feel proud when persons so honour me without undertaking any other engagement than that which Mr. Delane always makes good—of making themselves agreeable during the time of their stay."

There was some economy of truth in this statement, one must confess, but it was true so far as it went. Delane liked the Minister's breezy manner, and Delane's easy bearing pleased the Minister. In their outlook upon politics they saw, for the most part, eye to eye. Each was sturdily patriotic, and each held in equal dislike the doctrines of the Manchester school. "Cobden showed me a note," said John Bright, in 1854, "written by Mr. Delane of *The Times*, in which he said 'Cobden and Bright would be our Ministers now, but for their principle of peace at all price, against which I have done all I can to warn them.'" [1] In their prejudices and prepossessions, in their preference for sound administration over radical reform, in their narrowly cheerful view that the world of England was going very well as it was, Palmerston and Delane were equally representative of the middle opinion of their time. The alliance was thus well grounded, and I suppose that no Prime Minister has ever been on terms so close for so long a period with a

[1] *Trevelyan*, p. 242.

journalist as those which existed between Palmerston and the editor of *The Times* during the years 1855 to 1865. How free Delane was from servility; how little his attitude savoured of simpering or enervation; how completely, on the other hand, Delane, who greatly admired Palmerston's independence of spirit, maintained his own: all this will appear in the sequel.

After peace was concluded with Russia Delane went to Canada and the United States for a holiday, having Laurence Oliphant as his travelling companion. The American Press, which in recent years has had a great influence on that of England, did not please Delane. On his return he soon found politics very absorbing. The action of the Chinese authorities in seizing a lorcha (or coasting schooner) called the *Arrow* had led to an attack on Canton. Palmerston was accused of bullying a weak country. Radicals and Conservatives and some of the Peelites combined against him, and Cobden's resolution was carried against the Government by a majority of 16. In this crisis, as previously, *The Times* gave to the Government support which Palmerston acknowledged to Delane as "handsome and powerful." The division on the China motion was taken on March 3. *The Times*, in its leading article next day, stigmatised the coalition of Lord Derby, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. Cobden against Lord Palmerston as unpatriotic and un-English. "We express these feelings," it said, "not as our own alone, but as those natural to all Englishmen. The result of an appeal to the country will prove that we are not mistaken in this estimate of our national spirit; for even a triple coalition of party chiefs will not muster a majority of the British

constituency round its questionable tricolor." Delane was a true prophet. Lord Palmerston at once appealed to the country. The question was of confidence, or no confidence, in him, and it was answered in the affirmative.

The answer seemed conclusive, for Palmerston met the new Parliament (April 30) with a majority of 79. The very completeness of his personal triumph was, however, as we shall see that Delane thought, the Prime Minister's undoing. Meanwhile the Indian Mutiny had broken out, and Palmerston faced the danger with cheery resolution and resource. Delane's conduct of *The Times* through this same ordeal won high praise. "You are doing much good in Indian matters," wrote Lord Granville to him, "preventing panic and keeping up the spirit of the country." His sources of information were many. His next younger brother, Major-General George Delane, of the Bengal Staff Corps, was commandant of the Governor-General's bodyguard. He was among the first to warn Delane of the disaffected state of the Indian troops, and wrote by nearly every mail from Calcutta. Lord Granville sent to Delane private letters from the Viceroy, and passed on to the Viceroy reports which Delane received from India. "Delane told Clarendon that all his accounts said that you had risen equal to the emergency and had won golden opinions in India." "Delane's brother must be a very good fellow from the letters I have seen, and swears by you" (Lord Granville to Lord Canning [1]). The Prime Minister gave Delane early information of appointments and plans. Delhi fell before the arrival of a single soldier from England (September 19), but Delane, being

[1] *Fitzmaurice, i.*, 254, 268.

convinced that the Mutiny would not finally be suppressed till after a protracted campaign, decided to send out W. H. Russell to join Sir Colin Campbell's force. The famous war correspondent's treatment by the authorities was very different from that which he had received in the Crimea and still more from that which has been the lot of some, though not all, of his successors in recent times and other conditions. Before he left London he saw Lord Granville at Delane's instance and was given an introduction to Lord Canning. On arriving at Calcutta Russell was at once granted an interview with the Governor-General, who sent him forward with a letter of recommendation to the Commander-in-Chief. "You are welcome," said Sir Colin when Russell reached Cawnpore; "you have seen something of war. I am going to tell you everything. You shall see all my reports, and get every information that I have myself, on the condition that you do not mention it in camp, or let it be known in any way, except in your letters to England." And a staff officer—the future Lord Napier of Magdala—was told off to show all the plans and render other assistance to Russell. With such opportunities, of which he made good use, it is not wonderful that the special correspondence of *The Times* fully maintained the reputation of the paper. His account of the famous night march to Lucknow was specially admired for its descriptive power. "You will be glad," wrote Mr. MacDonald, the manager of *The Times*, "to have confirmed to you the assurance that your work has given entire satisfaction and that we consider you have amply sustained your old supremacy over all competitors. Some of the electric letters were astonishingly vivid, and so far

from joining in the outcry against the wire as unfavourable to literary effect, my decided conviction now is that in competent hands it may be made to yield the most brilliant results." The cable charges alone for Russell's messages from India amounted to £5,000; "it was, however, one of those occasions," added the manager, "on which it would never have done for us to have been content with moving neck and neck with the penny papers." [1] Russell's humane nature and independent spirit caused him to render a higher service in stemming the tide of fierce resentment and reprisals. The proclamation which won for Lord Canning his honourable *sobriquet* had been issued before Russell arrived in India. The Governor-General's promise of clemency was received in England with loud disfavour. Delane was taking a holiday in Scotland at the time, and in his absence the paper joined in the outcry. The Cabinet was at first divided in opinion, but two of Delane's special friends —Lord Granville and Lord Clarendon—were from the first stout supporters of Lord Canning's proclamation. "I never liked any document so much," wrote Lord Granville to him (October 24). "I would have gone to India and back, and considered that I had done my duty gloriously by the simple penning of and issuing it. I was so angry with *The Times* that I began a letter for publication, but on reflection I thought better of it. I believe that Delane is out of town, and that it is Dasent. I wrote privately to Delane, remonstrating, for the first time in my life, on the extreme folly and nonsense of the attack. I have had no answer." When Delane returned, there was a change, and the Cabinet also rallied to Lord Canning.

[1] *Atkins*, i., 312.

"I got Clarendon," wrote Lord Granville (November 9), "to have a serious conversation with Delane, who is just come back from a holiday. *The Times*, you will observe, won't give itself up, but, I flatter myself, is veering round. I wish you would write to Clarendon to tell him that you are grateful for his very friendly exertions in all ways on your behalf." And again next day: "You see how dexterously and how self-complacently Delane is extricating *The Times* from the false position as regards you into which Dasent had put it." [1] Delane was an adept in the gentle art of journalistic curvature.[2] Russell, on going to India, made it a prime object, as he said, "to judge of the truth of the accounts of hideous massacres and outrages which were rousing to fury the people of England." He found that besides much that was both true and terrible there was an accretion of unverified outrages; he thought that the temper, and sometimes the conduct, of the English were too revengeful, and he did not hesitate to say so in his letters to *The Times*. In this Delane supported his correspondent. "I have nothing," wrote Delane (April 8, 1858), "but to congratulate you on the perfect success with which you have sustained your fame. I feel myself, and hear everybody saying, that we are at last beginning to learn something about India, which has always been a mystery—as far removed from our sight and which it was as impossible to comprehend as the fixed stars. The public feeling has righted itself more promptly than was to be expected, and we had before the recess a debate in which the most humane instead of the most blood-thirsty sentiments were

[1] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 261, 264, 265.

[2] Any reader who cares to see a good instance of it should look, successively, at the leading articles of November 5, 6 and 10, 1857.

uttered." [1] In effecting this change of feeling Delane and Russell had much influence. "Stanley," wrote Delane (August, 1858), "is a very good Indian Minister, and follows very obediently all the good advice you give him. I send him extracts from your private letters, and always see an immediate result. It was your first private letter from Cawnpore which led to the order against indiscriminate executions." [2] Lord Stanley himself said that the support given to Lord Canning's policy of clemency by Russell's letters in *The Times* had been of essential service.[3] In India itself they were not without effect. "Though I undergo a good deal of quizzing," wrote Russell to Delane (January 20, 1859), "it is more than compensated when I hear one man who threatens to break every bone in his bearer's skin held in check by the half-serious, half-joking remonstrance 'You had better not or you will have *The Times* down on you.'" [4]

It is one of the minor ironies of history that Lord Canning was nearly driven to resign by reason not of his clemency but of an allegation of undue severity. In the end the Minister who censured him resigned instead. In this affair which shook the home Government Russell and Delane again played a prominent part. It was on this wise. After the capture of Lucknow, Canning issued a proclamation (March 3, 1858) in which he declared the whole of the land of Oude, with the exception of that held by six proprietors, forfeited to the Crown. This seemed to many men, and among others to Sir James Outram,

[1] *Atkins*, i., 311.
[2] *Atkins*, i., 342. In the same letter Delane discusses a rumour that Disraeli was to be appointed Viceroy of India.
[3] *Atkins*, i., 370.
[4] *Atkins*, i., 360.

far too severe a measure of confiscation. Canning's purpose, however, was not in fact to deprive any large number of landowners of their property, but only to secure a free hand for the reorganisation of the conquered province, and, in deference to Outram's criticisms, he introduced into the proclamation as actually published in India a clause announcing that liberal indulgence would be extended to those who came forward speedily in support of order. Canning also sent to Mr. Vernon Smith (President of the Board of Control in Palmerston's Administration) a private letter thus explaining his intentions. But things happened which produced out of this material a first-rate political crisis. First, a copy of the proclamation without the added clause was sent to England. Meanwhile Lord Palmerston was out, and Lord Derby in. His President, Lord Ellenborough, had the proclamation before him, but not the private letter to his predecessor Mr. Vernon Smith. Lord Ellenborough, in a moment of impetuosity, wrote a despatch censuring Lord Canning in very bitter terms, and the despatch, together with the proclamation, was printed by Delane on May 8. The publication brought consternation into one political camp and hope into the other. Lord Canning, a man of notorious clemency, struggling in the midst of a sea of troubles, had been publicly reprimanded. It was on reading the paper of May 8 that Lord Derby and most of his colleagues learnt for the first time of the difficult situation in which Lord Ellenborough had placed them. The Opposition at once prepared a vote of censure upon the Government. "One effect of your last letter," wrote Delane to Russell (May 8, 1858), "has been what is tantamount to the recall of Canning.

The proclamation you enclosed for the annexation of the soil of Oude has been severely censured by Ellenborough, and either by design or inadvertence the dispatch containing the censure has been allowed to ooze out so that Canning can scarcely submit to the affront." [1] The outcry against Lord Ellenborough was, however, so great that he had to save the Government by resigning; and Lord Canning at the earnest request of the Prime Minister consented to retain office. "As to the proclamation business," wrote Delane to Russell in India (September 3, 1858), "it was never discussed here on its merits or demerits alone. It came complicated with Ellenborough's insane despatch which compelled his resignation, and was made the battleground of the two parties in the fierce struggle for office. It was fairly to be presumed too that Canning, after having suffered for months from imputations of leniency and undue favour of the natives, would only have threatened such severity upon good and substantial reasons, and the Government proposed to condemn him at once without waiting for his reasons. To bait a man for ten months for being too lenient and then publicly to censure him for a solitary act of harshness seemed too unjust." [2] Delane's comments are characteristic of his good sense and detached view. Lord Ellenborough's resignation put an end for the time to the fierce struggle, and the assault upon the Government collapsed. One result of the crisis was to make Lord Stanley President of the Board of Control—a position for which Delane had nominated him when the Derby Administration was formed.[3]

[1] *Atkins*, i., 328.
[2] To Russell, September 3, 1858 (*Atkins*, i., 347).
[3] *Dasent*, i., 284.

The recital of these events has carried us forward into the days of the Derby Administration, and we must now go back in point of time to the events which brought it into being. The political wheel has seldom taken a more surprising turn than that which overthrew Lord Palmerston on February 20, 1858. Less than a year before, he had triumphed over all his opponents at the polls, and his spirited foreign policy had been one of the main issues. He was now defeated by a combination in which some of the chief opponents of that policy took a leading part. The occasion was the Conspiracy to Murder Bill, brought in by the Government after Orsini had attempted to assassinate the Emperor Napoleon by bombs made in Birmingham. Mr. Milner Gibson, one of the Cobdenite Radicals, whose party had been routed by Palmerston at the polls, was now a teller against him. His offence, according to some of those who swelled the victorious list, was not pushfulness, but pusillanimity, and it was Mr. Gladstone who in thundering periods denounced the Minister for backwardness in asserting the national honour. On the particular issue the Minister who succeeded to office thought that his opponent was in the right.[1] In a situation presenting so much of paradox it is clear that the Conspiracy Bill was the occasion rather than the cause of the gust which overthrew Palmerston. Unseen causes, says his biographer, had been gradually sapping his ascendency in the House of Commons. Some injudicious appointments had alienated not a few of his supporters, and his manner had lately become too brusque and dictatorial.[2] Unseen by some others, these symptoms

[1] See Lord Derby's letter to the Queen in *Martin*, iv., 190.
[2] *Asbley*, ii. 356.

had not escaped the notice of Delane. Chief among the injudicious appointments was that of a man with a past to succeed Lord Harrowby as Lord Privy Seal. Palmerston, conscious perhaps of danger, had written in advance to Delane justifying the appointment. Delane, however, was not thus deterred from taking his own line. "Let us accept him (Lord Clanricarde)," wrote *The Times* (December 28, 1857), "with the calm placidity of men who know the vitality of a Whig. As long as a pupil of the late Mr. Canning or a Whig of the Reform Bill walks the earth we may expect his sudden apparition on the Ministerial Benches of either House. In jaunty youth, in pompous and declamatory manhood, in querulous and statistical old age, they will be always with us until somewhere in the days when our grandchildren are just about to ripen into politicians the last of the race at a patriarchal age will sink into the grave upon the rejection of his claims by the then Premier for a five-and-twentieth return to office." Delane's attack was better humoured than those of some later politicians upon "the Old Gang"; but he warned Lord Palmerston in a more serious vein that "a generation has arisen which requires something more solid in intellect and character than is promised by the previous reputation of the accomplished marquis." His appointment raised a storm, and Greville had "no doubt that it was the real cause of the downfall of the Government." [1] Delane probably attached greater weight to another fact. Writing seventeen years later upon the downfall of another Prime Minister, he drew a parallel from his remembrance of the past. Pride goes before a fall. Ministers who conceive them-

[1] *Greville* ii., 173.

selves to hold a general commission from the public are apt to be high-handed. "When Lord Palmerston dissolved on the China question, and the country gave him a strong personal majority, his errors in demeanour so estranged the House that it overthrew him in less than a twelvemonth." [1]

Delane's personal relations with the Prime Minister were as friendly as before, but the tone of articles in the paper showed his feeling that the Government was losing ground. "*The Times*," wrote Greville, "which is always ready to assist in the discomfiture of a losing party, is now showing unmistakable symptoms of its own doubts whether the Government is any longer worth supporting, and Delane told me yesterday he thought they would not remain long in office, and that it is time they should go, and he ridiculed the idea of its not being practicable to form another Government." This entry is dated January 28, 1858. Within a month Lord Palmerston was out and Lord Derby in; but then an editor of Delane's influence has considerable power in making his prophecies come true.

Great as was Delane's influence when Lord Palmerston was Prime Minister, it was scarcely less during the interval of the Derby Administration (1858—1859). It was a secret of his power to have friends in both camps; it was of the essence of his power not to be the tied paper of any party. On the morrow of Palmerston's defeat *The Times* was sympathetic, but advised him to resign forthwith. The next day was Sunday, and "Sunday," as Disraeli says in one of his novels, "is pre-eminently the day of *canards*."

[1] Leading article, February 21, 1874. The article is said to have been written by Delane himself: see below, p. 244.

Delane put this extract at the head of a " Provisional List " of the new Administration which he published on Monday (February 22). The list gave Mr. Gladstone as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Disraeli as Foreign Secretary—in the light of subsequent events a sufficiently *bizarre* combination, but at the time probable enough. Disraeli had doubtless told Delane of Lord Derby's overtures to Mr. Gladstone, who, however, preferred to be a buttress, rather than an inside pillar, of the anti-Palmerston Government. Two days later the official list showed Mr. Disraeli as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Lord Malmesbury as Foreign Secretary. At first *The Times* chaffed Lord Derby good-naturedly as Conservative Prime Minister by grace of Mr. Milner Gibson the Radical (February 23); but ten days later Greville noted " symptoms of a disposition on the part of *The Times* to support the new Government, and I have little doubt that they can secure this great advantage if they manage their affairs with common prudence, and set to work diligently to frame such measures of improvement and utility as will satisfy public opinion." An independent editor could desire no better tribute to his impartiality and public spirit. The new Government showed itself anxious to secure Delane's support. His friend Disraeli kept him informed of the process of Cabinet-making. Lord Derby, forgetting past animosities, corresponded with him. With the Foreign Secretary he was on friendly terms : " a man of great intelligence," Lord Malmesbury said of him, " much appreciated by both political parties." A letter of Delane's, written shortly after the new Government had been defeated, shows the terms on which they stood. A belated Blue-book had appeared, and *The*

Times praised the despatches of Lord Malmesbury, who then wrote to thank Delane. "Allow me," replied Delane (June 20, 1859), "to suggest, in reply to your phrase 'posthumous praise,' that it was not my fault the praise came too late. I sincerely believe that if you had published your despatches a fortnight earlier they would have had a very important influence on the division; and I think it has been sufficiently proved that I should have done you justice irrespective of party interests." [1] Delane was in close touch, too, with Lord Stanley, who, as related above, became Secretary of State for India. The Minister and the editor exchanged information, and the latter was often consulted about Indian appointments. "Measures of improvement and utility" were duly framed. The Government of India was reconstituted. The long vexed question as to the admission of the Jews to Parliament was settled. The crusade for sanitary reform, led from behind the scenes by Florence Nightingale, had a strong supporter in Lord Stanley, and *The Times* devoted considerable space to the subject. It began to look as if the stop-gap Government of Lord Derby might survive for some time; and, though it would be absurd to attach great importance to an expression in a single letter, especially in one written to Bernal Osborne, there is a passage which suggests that Delane thought for the moment that the sun of Palmerston had set. At the end of October, 1858, the Emperor of the French, for reasons of his own, took the unusual step of inviting Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon, leaders of the Opposition, to visit him at Compiègne. They accepted the invitation;

[1] *Malmesbury*, ii., 192.

reluctantly, it seems, and chiefly because they could not concoct any decent excuse. Neither had handy at the moment any attack of the gout.[1] Their acceptance caused much adverse comment in this country. Both Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon wrote to Delane, submitting apologetic justifications for their action, but Delane found the one if possible more lame than the other. "Did any one ever hear of or imagine such folly? I think you may safely recant your allegiance to both these luminaries."[2] Lord John Russell was much of the same mind. "Palmerston and Clarendon have done themselves infinite harm," he said, "by going to Compiègne. They must hereafter be considered rather as courtiers of the Tuileries than subjects of St. James's."[3]

Clarendon perhaps did suffer harm, but not Palmerston. The Derby Administration, though it had done well in uncontroversial matters, was only a Government on sufferance; as soon as it touched a burning question of party controversy it was doomed; and on the second reading of Disraeli's Reform Bill (March 31, 1859) it was defeated and dissolved Parliament. The elections resulted in an estimated Liberal majority of 43; in June the Ministry was defeated on the Address, and Lord Palmerston again became Prime Minister. Lord John Russell insisted on having the Foreign Office and Lord Clarendon, as he could not return there, chose to stand out. He sent a full account of the matter to Delane, desiring that in any history of the formation of the new Cabinet his conduct should not be misinterpreted.[4] Delane, though

[1] See Lord Palmerston's letter to Delane in *Dasent*, i., 303.
[2] Delane to Bernal Osborne, *Dasent*, i., 304.
[3] *Maxwell*, ii., 165.
[4] The letter is in *Dasent*, i., 314, 315.

he did not greatly admire Clarendon's foreign policy —"Malmesbury," he had written in 1858, "is at least not worse than Clarendon"—was always friendly to him, and when Cobden declined to join the new Government Delane took occasion to press upon Lord Palmerston the claims of another Free Trader, Lord Clarendon's brother, Charles Villiers, to a seat in the Cabinet.

Before Lord Palmerston became Prime Minister there was an abortive attempt to form a Government under Lord Granville, whose relations with Delane on this occasion caused a prodigious hubbub in exalted circles. When Lord Derby resigned it was the universal expectation that the Queen would send either for Lord Palmerston or for Lord John Russell. In fact, she sent for neither. The task of making a selection between them was so invidious that the idea occurred to her of entrusting the formation of a Government to the Liberal leader in the House of Lords, under whom, she hoped, both Palmerston and Russell might be willing to serve. She sent for Lord Granville accordingly, who accepted the Royal commission. This was on June 11. Lord Granville tried but failed (June 12), and Lord Palmerston was sent for. On June 14 (Monday) there appeared in *The Times* an account of the crisis, telling how the Queen had sent for Lord Granville, giving her reasons for so doing, and explaining how and why he had failed. If majesty be ever furious, the Queen was so as she read *The Times*. "Whom am I to trust?" she said to Lord Clarendon; "these were my own very words."[1] To Lord Granville himself she wrote

[1] *Greville*, ii., 257, where it is stated (June 27) that Lord Clarendon afterwards succeeded in persuading her Majesty that all had been for the best,

immediately saying that she was much shocked to find her whole conversation with him detailed in *The Times;* her confidential intercourse ought to be sacred; communication to the Press was the more objectionable because, in the event of any misrepresentation, the Queen would have no protection, as she could not well insert contradictions or explanations in the newspapers herself.[1] There was much speculation upon the source and nature of Delane's information. Was this a case of half-lights and happy intuition? or had Lord Granville himself spoken indiscreetly, and if so, to whom? Such points were keenly discussed and angrily pressed, and on the 16th Lord Derby called attention to the matter in a crowded House of Lords. He echoed the Queen's indignation, and went on—whether sincerely or ironically I do not know—to acquit his noble friend Lord Granville of "the slightest charge of having sanctioned this publication. Only two or three persons could have been present at that conversation —her Majesty, probably the Prince Consort, and my noble friend. It is therefore perfectly obvious that my noble friend's confidence has been grossly abused by some person or other. No doubt there was some one with whom it was his duty to communicate on receiving that communication from her Majesty, but clearly that person was not the editor of a newspaper." Lord Granville in reply had "no hesitation in saying that he was not guilty of that breach of confidence from which the noble earl had been kind enough to

"as the article (however indecorous it might appear) had in fact been eminently serviceable to her, inasmuch as it negatived any suspicion of intrigue or underhand dealing in any quarter and represented her own conduct in a manner to excite universal approbation."

[1] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, iii., 443. The Queen did not, however, always so refrain; see below, p. 150.

exculpate him." Having obtained from her Majesty permission to state to his friends what had taken place, "in the course of the same evening I made a statement generally to several of my friends—some political, some private—as to what has passed, but I never meant in respect of any one circumstance to give her Majesty's language. . . . It is quite clear that the article in *The Times* was founded on one or more of the statements which I had made myself on the previous evening." Lord Granville clearly left it to be inferred that Delane had put together hints obtained from leaky friends. In reply to the Queen's remonstrance, he had already conveyed the same suggestion. "Lord Granville was extremely annoyed this morning at seeing the article in *The Times* of to-day, repeating with some accuracy, but in a vulgar, inflated manner the account which Lord Granville gave yesterday afternoon to many of his political friends, and which he believed your Majesty had authorized him to do."

Mr. Labouchere used to say that when the two Front Benches agreed it was time for simple Truth to have a care; and only very ingenuous persons suppose, when a gentle scratch is exchanged between noble or right honourable friends, that the whole of a case is exposed. It certainly was not in the present instance. Who would have gathered from Lord Granville's statements that on his return from Buckingham Palace on June 12 he had written to Delane himself a full account of the transactions, giving the Queen's words in inverted commas, and that he had so written with an obvious view to publication at the editor's discretion? "If you make any use of this information," he said, "pray wrap it up, as

you know how to do." Whether Delane's treatment was vulgar or not is a question of taste; I have looked up the article, and personally find it quite inoffensive; the inflation which also offended Lord Granville was a necessity of the wrapping up. Delane never revealed all this; the truth only came out thirty years after his death in his "Life and Correspondence," wherein Lord Granville's letter is printed.[1] Delane's own comment upon the debate at the time was cleverly discreet. He accepted Lord Granville's version absolutely: "Lord Granville related to friends what had passed. As a good many people were interested in hearing what had passed, a good many heard." What the Queen must have said was obvious to any well-informed person; *The Times* itself had predicted it in advance. (It is a familiar trick of editors who have in fact received private and exclusive information to represent that their rivals had failed only in intelligent intuition.) Then Delane adroitly carried the war into the enemy's camp. If anybody had been guilty of a breach of confidence it was Lord Derby himself, who, while still her Majesty's servant, had averred that the account given in *The Times* contained the Queen's very words. "Till Lord Derby informed the world last night, people at large did not suppose our account of the interview to be so literally exact as we are now proud to learn it really was." Lord Granville in later years thanked Delane for "a thousand great favours." The editor's conduct on this occasion was one of them. Mr. Jowett included in his "Maxims for Statesmen and Others," Never Tell. Upon no others is the maxim more binding than upon editors. To respect

[1] *Dasent*, i., 313.

confidences is with them a counsel of prudence as well as a law of honour; for no statesman is likely to run the risk of being betrayed a second time. In the present instance Delane's observance of the rule was peculiarly easy. Incidentally it placed Lord Granville under an obligation; but apart from this, Delane had no reason to regard the incident with anything other than amused complacency. The gist of the thing was that his paper had somehow or other got hold of the Queen's very words. Lord Derby had given him the advertisement of a debate in the House of Lords to show that to *The Times* even the secrets of the palace were open. That men should be left wondering how the thing had been done only added to its piquancy.

The interest of Lord Palmerston's second Administration is largely foreign. It was the period which saw the liberation of Italy, the insurrection of Poland, the American Civil War, and the dismemberment of Denmark by Prussia. In some of these events England either took a wrong side or played an inglorious part, and Delane was seldom more far-sighted than the majority of his countrymen at the time. In one sphere at least the part played by Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell was creditable: they rendered powerful aid to the cause of Italian freedom. Their sympathies were so well known that a wag at Court described their accession to office as "the return of the Old Italian Masters." When the figures of the division which overthrew Lord Derby were announced, the Piedmontese Minister, who was waiting with some other foreigners in the lobby, "threw his hat into the air and himself into the arms of the French attaché,

which probably no ambassador, or even Italian, ever did before in so public a place." [1] The fate of Italy was trembling in the balance, and the attitude of England was of the first importance. In April, 1859, France and Sardinia had gone to war with Austria. The battle of Magenta had been fought on June 3. The crowning victory of Solferino was still to come. The settlement after the war was full of doubt and peril. England had declared her neutrality, but the Derby Cabinet had some Austrian leanings, and the English Court, as Queen Victoria's letters sufficiently show, was inclined in the same direction. In this state of things the fate of English Cabinets and the attitude of *The Times*, as the foremost representative of English public opinion, were matters of European concern. We cannot here follow the course of events in detail; it will suffice to say that within two years of the accession of Lord Palmerston to power Italy was free and united, with the exception of the Quadrilateral, Venice and Rome, and that in this making of modern Italy Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell were among the instruments. A famous despatch by Lord John was declared by Count Brunnow to be "not diplomacy but blackguardism," and by Cavour to be "worth a dozen victories in the field."

From the middle of 1859 onwards *The Times* under Delane gave strong and steady support to the Italian cause. It has sometimes been said that this was one of many instances in which the attitude of Delane was shifty and unprincipled. It is alleged that he had originally been "pro-Austrian," and Mrs. Browning asked what price Austria paid.[2] "*The Times*," says

[1] *Malmesbury*, ii., 187.
[2] *Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, ii., 317.

another writer, "remained Austrian until well on in the year 1859, when it became evident that the Italian cause might not improbably succeed." [1] The fact is, however, that Delane was not so much pro-Austrian as anti-French. Delane's lack of sympathy at the outset for the Italian cause was caused first by a desire to preserve England from being embroiled in war, and next by his deep-rooted distrust of the Emperor Napoleon. Early in January, 1859, when the Emperor and King Victor Emmanuel had made speeches clearly pointing to war, Delane gave instructions that "every one who writes on the Italian subject" was to "keep in view the necessity of our taking no share in the mess." [2] He was, now as always, profoundly distrustful of the Emperor's intentions. Lord Palmerston had from time to time written friendly remonstrances to Delane, begging him "to slacken *The Times* fire against the Emperor of the French." But Delane stood to his guns, and before very long Palmerston came to be much of the editor's opinion. The terms of the Peace of Villafranca and the cession of Savoy and Nice to France was to confirm Delane in his views, and the course of events made him, as an anti-Napoleonite, a pro-Italian. A tour which he had made in Italy in the autumn of 1859, inspecting the battlefields and investigating the state of affairs in the duchies, seems to have quickened Italian sympathies in him. "Two days ago," wrote Sir Austen Layard from Rome (October 17, 1859), "I met here Delane, the editor of *The Times*, and spent a day with him. He is very much changed on the subject of Italian affairs and I see that the

[1] Trevelyan's "Garibaldi and the Thousand," p. 24.
[2] *Dasent*, i., 308.

articles in *The Times* are written in a very different tone." [1]

It had been agreed at Villafranca (July, 1859) between the two Emperors to favour the establishment of an Italian confederation, and that the Grand Dukes should return to Tuscany and Modena. Time and the determination of the Italian people had shown Louis Napoleon the futility of his scheme, and at the beginning of 1860 fresh combinations were in his mind. Delane, though now more sympathetic to the cause of Italian unity, was still averse from any diplomatic action which would have involved England in alliance with France or in a promise of military support. "If," said *The Times* on January 6, "we know anything of the sentiments of our countrymen, nothing is more certain than that this nation would not endure any Ministry which should propose to pledge England to an offensive alliance with France against the rest of Europe. We wish well to Italy, but we do not 'go to war for an idea.' If we did so, we should prefer to do so upon our own policy, and with confidence in our own right. If we did so, we should moreover prefer to have some control over our own position, and some confidence that our allies would fight out the whole fight with us, and not make peace at inconvenient seasons." An obvious hit at the Peace of Villafranca! This article and one on the previous day, based on the supposition that Louis Napoleon had made overtures to England for such an alliance, caused much stir in the inner circles. Such overtures had been made; the Son of Venus and Ivan Ivanovitch (Cabinet nicknames for Palmerston and Russell) were disposed to accept them; the

[1] *Layard*, ii., 223.

majority of the Cabinet, supported by the Court, were against them. The Prince Consort saw in *The Times'* articles knowledge of "what has passed in the Cabinet, and which can only have come from one of its members." [1] And it is by no means improbable that Lord Granville had spoken or written to Delane; but another source of information is also possible. A curious passage in Greville's Journal relates how, a few weeks earlier, the French Ambassador showed to Lord John Russell in strict confidence a letter from the Emperor to the King of Sardinia. Russell promised to mention it to nobody, except of course to Palmerston. A day or two later he read the letter in *The Times*. There was consternation in official circles, and inquiries were set on foot through all the chancelleries. The French Foreign Minister took the case to the Emperor, proposing to make remonstrances at Turin. "No," said Louis Napoleon, "take no notice of the publication. The fact is, I sent the letter myself to *The Times'* correspondent." "A most extraordinary proceeding," was the puzzled comment of Greville, who proceeded to dilate on the theme that in this wicked world things may not be always what they seem. Here was *The Times* inveighing publicly against the Emperor, and the Emperor never failing in private conversation to inveigh against *The Times*, to which nevertheless he secretly sent confidential information. Was it all a stage-play? Who could tell whether the Emperor "may not all the time have a secret understanding with *The Times?*" [2] These were idle suggestions. The Emperor was not the only great personage who both courted and feared *The*

[1] *Martin*, v., 7.
[2] *Greville*, ii., 273—274.

Times; this was not the first, nor the last, occasion on which great personages were disappointed in finding that Delane's independence could not be bought off by "tips."

At the beginning of 1860 Delane's view of a particular negotiation happened to coincide with that of the Court and to be opposed to that of Palmerston. At a later stage in the Italian question Delane did not hesitate to support Lord Palmerston against the Court. It would be too much to say that the Queen and the Prince thwarted the Italian policy of Palmerston and Russell, but unquestionably there was a want of sympathy with that policy at Court. "What we must all desire," said *The Times* (April 12, 1861), "is that Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell should be able to convince foreign Powers that in no quarter is there any antipathy to the Italian cause. As long as these statesmen are unable to conceal from the diplomatists with whom they deal that they maintain their policy only through the support given them by the strong feeling of the people, it will be impossible for England to have her just weight in European affairs. The country has a right to expect that neither Vienna nor Berlin shall have reason to cherish expectations in disaccord with the warnings of the Crown's responsible Ministers." This plain speaking gave great umbrage at Court, and the Ministers in question had to give assurances that the article was without any warrant of authority.[1]

In relation to another foreign Power Delane took up an attitude which brought down upon him the censures alike of Ministers and of the Court. He was violently anti-Prussian. He had all the free-born

[1] *Martin*, v., 337.

Englishman's dislike of the regulation-ridden Germans; he hated the overbearing arrogance of Prussian officials. Lord Palmerston was doubtless very much of the same mind, but he thought that Delane was overdoing the thing. In 1860 a British traveller, Captain Macdonald, had been roughly handled by railway officials at Bonn, and was imprisoned for resisting them. *The Times* took up the matter hotly and called for redress. This "Bonn" or "Macdonald" *affaire*, as it was variously called, excited a great hubbub, was the subject of long diplomatic correspondence between the two Governments, and led to heated scenes in the several Parliaments. An apology was obtained, but Delane would not leave the *affaire* alone. Later in the year, at a turn in the diplomatic wheel, Prussia was soliciting English support in certain proposals with regard to the Italian question. "For our part," said *The Times*, "we at once declare that the ways of Prussia are not our ways, and that we will not follow an inch on the road of despotism." [1] Then followed reflections on the Macdonald affair. The Prince Consort complained loudly of this article as "positively too wicked." [2] In January, 1861, the King of Prussia died, being succeeded by his brother William, and a reign began which was destined, though none foresaw it, to change the face of Europe. *The Times* did not cease its attacks upon Prussia. Delane was no more a respecter of crowned heads than was Lord Palmerston; and there was much both in the foreign and in the domestic policy of the Prussian Government which did not seem to promise well for the new reign, and

[1] Leading article, October 23, 1860.
[2] *Martin*, v., 229.

which filled even so friendly an onlooker as the Prince Consort with misgiving.[1] In October the new King was to be crowned, and Lord Clarendon was sent to represent the Queen. The solemnities of the occasion did not deter Delane from outspoken criticisms. In addressing the members of the Prussian Chambers on the day before the coronation the King had spoken of the Divine Right of the Lord's Anointed in terms which his grandson has made familiar to the present generation. *The Times* promptly fell upon the speech with allusions to the Stuarts and the Revolution of 1688.[2] Lord Clarendon had been received with marks of special favour by the King and Queen; he was anxious for the popularity of the Crown Princess; and he was also concerned for the establishment of good relations between the two countries. It is significant of the position which Delane had made for his paper that Lord Clarendon attached all the importance of an untoward international incident to the articles in *The Times*. He did not write to Delane himself; he deemed the situation so grave as to call for intervention in the highest quarter. He wrote to the Queen from Berlin on October 21, calling her Majesty's attention to "the enormous and wanton mischief done by the articles in *The Times*," and suggesting that the Queen should communicate with the Prime Minister on the subject. Three days later he again wrote of the "incalculable mischief that all the recent articles have done."[3] If the Queen consulted the Prince on the receipt of these letters, it is possible that he said, I told you so. We know from a memo-

[1] *Martin*, v., 230, 349.
[2] Leading article, October 24, 1861.
[3] *Maxwell*, ii., 246; *Martin*, v., 399, 400.

randum in the Queen's hand that the Prince was continually harping on the "wickedness" of *The Times*. "He would not hear," wrote the Queen, "of my saying, it did not signify, and he was right. 'You always say, it is of no consequence, but I assure you, everybody reads *The Times* and forms their opinion upon it.'" [1] Immediately upon the receipt of Lord Clarendon's second letter the Queen wrote to Lord Palmerston, believing that he "is the only person who could exercise any influence over Mr. Delane, and even if this should not be much, it will be important that that gentleman should know the mischief his writings are doing and that the Government sincerely deplore it." Lord Palmerston "wrote to Mr. Delane in accordance with your Majesty's wishes," and in due course forwarded to the castle the following letter:—

"16, SERJEANTS' INN,
"*28th October*, 1861.

"MY DEAR LORD,—I shall be very glad to give the Prussians a respite from that most cruel of all inflictions—good advice. Indeed, I would not have intruded anything so unwelcome during the splendid solemnities of the coronation had not the King uttered those surprising anachronisms upon Divine Right. Pray observe, too, in extenuation of my offence that I sent a faithful chronicler to Königsberg, who has described all the splendours in a proper and reverent spirit, and done what man can do to render such ceremonies intelligible, and the recital of them not too wearisome to those who believe in Divine Right as little as your Lordship's very faithful servant,

"JOHN T. DELANE." [2]

This letter has been described as "almost incredibly impertinent." [3] But Delane's relation to Lord Pal-

[1] *Martin*, v., 229.
[2] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, iii., 588.
[3] *Maxwell*, ii., 247.

merston was not that of a schoolboy to an usher; it was hardly even that, in any kind, of a subordinate to a superior. They were not only political associates, but personal friends. Delane in his letter adopted the bantering tone which Lord Palmerston practised and appreciated. And there was in the letter a hit at his friend which, though it seems to have escaped Delane's critic, was palpable enough. Who was it that was famed throughout Europe for giving good advice, which the recipients resented? And in this very matter of the Bonn incident, which was the starting-point of the newspaper polemics between England and Prussia, it was Lord Palmerston who from his place in Parliament had added fuel to the flame by pitying the Prussians for having such laws as had made the incident possible and by offering them a whole speechful of good advice.

The Anglo-Prussian incidents, above mentioned, were followed in the same year, 1861, by a far more serious foreign complication, and here again Lord Palmerston and Delane were in close touch. In the civil war in America the sympathies of both of them, as indeed of most of the upper and middle classes in this country, were with the South, and England's recognition of the seceding States as belligerents had given great offence to President Lincoln. The war between North and South in America was accompanied by a sort of newspaper war between America and England. Lord Palmerston in a letter to the Queen said that "in this very year 1861 England endured the abuse of the American Press, virulent as it was, with entire equanimity." [1] American opinion was more sensitive to what the English papers said,

[1] *Martin*, v., 401 *n.*; see below, p. 275.

and our Press with some notable exceptions—especially the *Daily News* and the *Spectator*—was strongly Southern in its sympathies and prejudices. This feeling was intensified when the English steamer *Trent*, bound from one neutral port to another, was stopped and searched by a Northern ship of war, and four of the passengers—including Messrs. Mason and Slidell, envoys from the South accredited to England and France respectively—were made prisoners. The excitement throughout the United Kingdom was intense when these facts became known after the arrival of the *Trent* at Southampton on November 27. The British Government demanded reparation and redress, and preparations were immediately made for war in the event of such redress being refused. The fratricidal war would probably have broken out but for the tact of the Prince Consort in softening down certain phrases in Lord John Russell's despatch. In the end the American Government gave way, and the persons taken from the *Trent* were liberated. British diplomacy achieved a success, it has been said,[1] which was not equalled until Fashoda in 1897. Lord Lyons, the British Minister in America, to whom next to the Prince Consort the credit belongs, attributed the success to two causes. One was the slowness of communication; "if there had then been telegraphic communication it would have been impossible to avert war."[2] The other was the promptness of the British Government in making warlike preparations. "I don't think it likely," Lord Lyons had written from Washington on November 19, "they will give in, but I do not think it impossible they may

[1] Lord Newton's "Life of Lord Lyons," i., 71.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 78.

do so, particularly if the next news from England brings note of warlike preparation and determination on the part of the Government and the people." [1] If this be a correct diagnosis, then Delane, who was in close touch with Lord Palmerston throughout the crisis, is entitled to some share of credit for the result. The "next mail" did bring news of "warlike preparation." "Saw Palmerston in Downing Street," wrote Delane in his diary (November 28), "and heard that the Cabinet had determined to demand reparation." The mail brought also, in a series of leading articles in *The Times*, a note of "determination on the part of the people." [2] Many public men wrote to Delane thanking him for articles which by their firm and yet not too aggressive tone seemed likely to conduce to the preservation of peace.[3]

The influence of *The Times* with regard to the civil war generally was less fortunate, though the case against the paper has been somewhat over-stated. Bright, in what is perhaps the noblest and wiset of all his speeches, complained in December, 1861, that "in *The Times*, the most powerful representative of English opinion, at least of the richer classes, there has not been since Mr. Lincoln took office, in March last, one fair and honourable and friendly article on American affairs." [4] Delane's own correspondent, W. H. Russell, told him that "the bitter leaders in *The Times* do the harm and excite the people." Russell was made the scapegoat, and President Lincoln "looked black as thunder" at him. "Nothing

[1] *Martin*, v., 419 *n.*
[2] See *The Times* during December, 1861, *passim*. The article of December 10 is a good example of what is stated above.
[3] *Dasent*, ii., 37.
[4] Speech at Rochdale, December 4, 1861.

illustrates better the power of a journal," says the historian of the United States, "than the utterances of *The Times* which irritated Americans more than any speech of Palmerston, any despatch of Earl Russell, and I think I may safely add any violation of Great Britain's neutrality. Let one imagine how different would have been the feeling between the two English-speaking nations had the ability and influence of this newspaper been on the side of the North." [1] These are powerful tributes to the influence of the paper, and one must regret that it was not used on the better side. The regret must be the greater because at the first Delane's intuition was not at fault. "We cannot disguise from ourselves," said *The Times* in January, 1861, "that there is a right and a wrong in this question and that the right belongs to the States of the North." And again: "South Carolina has no more right to secede from the nation called the United States than Lancashire from England." Delane's first thoughts were overridden by factors which misled the opinion of most of his fellow-countrymen—by the *Trent* affair, by the vilification of England in the Northern Press, by Lincoln's apparent hesitation on the issue of slavery, by sympathy with the weaker side, by the injury which the war inflicted on the cotton trade. The language which Delane permitted to be used of one of the heroic figures of the modern world is deplorable. "Is the name of Lincoln ultimately to be classed," asked *The Times* (October 14, 1862), "in the catalogue of monsters, wholesale assassins and butchers of their kind?" The question deserves to stand among

[1] "History of the United States," by James Ford Rhodes, iv., 83.

conspicuous examples of the aberrations of human judgment. It stands, however, to Delane's credit that his special correspondent in America was allowed to write impartially and dispassionately. Russell's sympathies were with the North. "I had no theories to uphold," he tells us, "no prejudices to subserve, no interests to advance, no instructions to fulfil; I was a free agent." [1]

The last foreign crisis with which during the lifetime of Lord Palmerston Delane had to deal was not less serious. It involved the future of Germany, and the risk of a general European war. The controversy about the duchies of Schleswig-Holstein is reputed to date from the charter of King Gorm the Old, a monarch who reigned in Denmark in the ninth century.[2] It is one of those intricate questions of which such things are said as that only one man in the world really understood it and he went mad, or that only two persons could claim to be masters of it and they disagreed. Much of the learning that surrounded the question was, however, irrelevant. The web of distinctions, devices, compromises which the diplomatists spun had little relation to the actualities of the case. A new Germany was coming into being, with ambitions of aggrandisement under the leadership of Bismarck, and the issues were to be settled by blood and iron. The Prussian attack on Denmark in 1848 had failed, and *The Times* had taken strongly the Danish side. "Germany," wrote Bunsen on that occasion, "hates England more than it ever did Napoleon, for the Schleswig article in *The Times*; to the degree that a general vow has been taken in some

[1] *Atkins*, ii., 2.
[2] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 453.

southern provinces not to wear any article of English manufacture, in order to show the resentment of Schleswig against the insolent articles of *The Times*."[1] It had been agreed by the Powers (1850—1852)—Austria, England, France, Prussia, and Russia—that "the state of the possessions actually united under the Crown of Denmark should be maintained in its integrity." Prussia was now resolved on annexation, and the only vital question was whether any of the non-Germanic Powers, singly or in combination, would intervene by force of arms on the side of Denmark. The British Government made overtures in that direction to France, which the Emperor Napoleon (inclined perhaps to give tit-for-tat for England's refusal to join with him in the case of Poland) rejected; so that ultimately the question was only whether England would go to war. It was known that the succession to the duchies would be disputed on the death of the King of Denmark, an event which in 1863 was imminent. On July 23 in that year Palmerston declared in the House of Commons that "if any violent attempt were made to overthrow the rights, and interfere with the independence, of Denmark, those who made the attempt would find in the result that it would not be Denmark alone with which they would have to contend." Bismarck, in alliance with Austria—help strangely requited at Sadowa—was not alarmed by this threat, and in January, 1864, the Prussian armies overran the duchies. The critical moment came in the middle of that year. There had been an armistice, and a Conference was held in London. This was proving abortive, and hostilities

[1] *Laughton*, i., 199.

would immediately be renewed. Was England to go in? The Cabinet was divided. The Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary were disposed to commit the country to single-handed intervention. The majority of their colleagues, and especially Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville, were on the other side, and Lord Clarendon, who had joined the Cabinet in April, 1864,[1] reinforced the peace party. Popular opinion, especially in London, sided with Palmerston and Russell; natural sympathy with a small Power, attacked by two powerful neighbours, had been strengthened by the recent marriage of the Prince of Wales to a Danish princess. The peace party, however, had an element of strength, more powerful even than the eloquence of Cobden and Bright. This was the attitude of Queen Victoria. From the first, she had surprised Ministers at home and Envoys from abroad by the minuteness and accuracy of her knowledge of the question. Though she counselled moderation on all parties, she was firmly resolved that her country should not be drawn into war. To this end she directed all her energies and resources. She expostulated; she insisted; it may even be said, on the strength of her communications with Lord Granville, that she intrigued. She had scored a point at the opening of the session of 1864 by securing the substitution in the Speech from the Throne of a colourless paragraph for an ambiguous menace. She continued to watch each development with the closest attention, seizing every opportunity to strengthen the hands of the peace party. In the fourth week of June the crisis was rapidly coming to a head, and the rival forces seemed nearly balanced.

[1] Some interesting correspondence on this event will be found in the next chapter, p. 159.

Delane was equally in the confidence of all; of the war party through Lord Palmerston, of the peace party through Lord Granville and Lord Clarendon, of the Court through his friends at Windsor. The Duke of Cambridge took means for passing on certain considerations to Delane, and when the Queen talked politics to Lord Torrington, "I felt it was *you*," he wrote to the editor, "not me she was talking to." It seemed uncertain for a time on which side *The Times* would declare itself. During the Conference Lord Palmerston had remonstrated with Delane on his too "German tone." [1] On June 21 and again on the 23rd the leading article, though carefully guarded, was on the whole bellicose in tone; but this was the fire of artillery covering a retreat. On June 24, the day before the fateful meeting of the Cabinet was to be held, Delane, though again with some caution, cast his vote for peace. Three days later he printed a powerful argument in favour of non-intervention. The attitude of *The Times* did much to rally the middle opinion of the nation in support of the probably wise, but certainly inglorious, policy.

The strain which this crisis imposed on all who had any share of responsibility was great. The Cabinet which decided the question of peace or war was held on Saturday, June 25. The Prime Minister "held his head down while the talk proceeded, and then at last looking up said in a neutral voice, 'I think the Cabinet is against war.'" [2] He had been defeated. The conflict against Prussia and Austria which was declined in the case of Denmark in 1864, and which perhaps could not then have been undertaken with

[1] See *Dasent*, ii., 105—106.
[2] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 118.

any hope of success, was reserved for our own day in the case of Belgium. It was long before Mr. Gladstone, the leader (with Lord Granville) of the peace party in the Cabinet, could drive the Dano-German question "out of his nerves." Upon the leader of the same party outside the Cabinet the strain was well nigh too hard to be borne. She was indeed able to think with pride as Queen that her determined stand against Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell was proving a decisive factor in saving her people from what she deemed to be an unnecessary war; but on the eve of the fateful Cabinet a cry from the heart of a lonely woman broke out. "The Queen is completely exhausted," she wrote to Lord Granville, "by the anxiety and suspense, and misses her beloved husband's help, advice, support and love in an overwhelming manner." [1] Upon Delane also, as upon more exalted personages, the strain told severely. He had been informed, no doubt, of the decision of the Cabinet, and Lord Palmerston or Lord Granville may have given him some general indication of the lines on which it would be explained and defended. But with his usual boldness he had decided to amplify such hints and to forestall the statements in Parliament by a precise account of what the Ministerial policy would be. The statements were to be made on Monday, June 27. On the morning of that day the leading article in *The Times* announced in detail "the result of the most important deliberations in which English statesmen have in our time been engaged." The forecast turned out to be perfectly correct, and Delane made another of his great journalistic successes; but an entry in his private diary betrays

[1] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 472.

the price in nervous strain which such adventures entail:—

"Could not sleep [on Sunday night] for anxiety as to the Ministerial explanation which I had anticipated. To the House of Commons and heard Palmerston. Then rode in the Park and dined alone."[1]

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 112.

CHAPTER VI

THE PALMERSTONIAN PERIOD: HOME AFFAIRS.

"The well-to-do Philistine looks to get his own view of the British world—that it is the best of all possible worlds as it is, because he has prospered in it—preached back to him *ore rotundo* in the columns of *The Times*."—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

"When I see the English reading *The Times*, they seem to me becoming every moment more British. They like it for the nationality and confidence of its tone. Then, they like its independence. It addresses occasionally a hint to Majesty itself."—EMERSON.

"WE are going on here much as usual," wrote Delane in London to Sir John Rose in Canada (June, 1860). "We have just buried our annual Reform Bill, and I, of course, assisted at the funeral, which I am bound to add was much more like a wake. Ellice is gouty, but rejoices over the Paper Duty and the Reform Bill; so does Lowe, and so, with decorous reticence, do I."

A motive for a certain reticence in the case of the Paper Duty is clear. Delane may have been sincerely opposed on general grounds to democratising the Press; but the commercial interests of his paper were also threatened. The "taxes on knowledge," as they were called, were three in number, and the cumulative effect of them was to protect the high-priced *Times* from any competition by cheap papers. There was, first, an Advertisement Duty of 1*s.* 6*d.* on every advertisement, however short. This was abolished in 1853. Then there was a Newspaper Stamp Duty

of a penny on each sheet. Towards the agitation for abolishing this duty Delane took up a varying attitude; sometimes ridiculing the movement for "a Brummagem Press"; at other times admitting the justice of repeal and pleading for such a readjustment as would not discriminate against his paper. The stamp duty of a penny per copy franked a newspaper through the post, but had to be paid just the same if it did not go through the post at all. The proprietors and editor of *The Times* saw that the removal of this tax would bring dangerous competition into the field. "What the London papers have to expect is," they said, "that in the manufacturing districts, there will be published early in the day, and circulated by private hands, a cheap class of papers giving all the news which we believe to be our principal attraction, and to obtain which we spend immense sums of money. We can easily conceive that it will answer the purpose of enterprising gentlemen to republish our news by 10 o'clock for the metropolitan circulation and two and four o'clock for the provincial districts." [1] As, however, some reform was inevitable, Delane concentrated his efforts upon opposition to any scheme which would have made the newspaper postal rate depend solely upon the bulk of the paper and thus have handicapped *The Times*. In case he should fail to secure any concession in this respect, he was ready with a scheme by means of which the London Press would have taken upon itself the carriage and delivery of all printed matter independently of the Post Office. He thought that this could have been done, even sixty years ago, at a cost of not more than one half-

[1] March 20, 1855. The competitors had their own news services, however; though there may have been newspapers which found *The Times* (as Fuseli said of Blake's designs) "d——d good to steal from."

penny per paper.[1] The Government, however, made the concession that a penny should frank any newspaper through the post, and in June, 1855, the Newspaper Stamp Duty, as such, was abolished. What was destined to be the most formidable of the rivals to *The Times* at once came into being, but the full force of competition was not felt for many years.[2] *The Times* itself reduced its price to 4½*d.*, and later to 4*d.* The tax on paper itself still remained. This Mr. Gladstone sought to remove by his Budget of 1860. The proposal, which was embodied in a separate Bill, passed the House of Commons by a majority of 9, and was rejected by the House of Lords. It was this that caused Delane to indulge in reticent rejoicing, which, however, was short lived. The action of the Lords, in obstructing a remission of taxation which the Commons thought desirable, raised a loud clamour; and when in the ensuing session Mr. Gladstone renewed his proposal and embodied the whole of his fiscal scheme in a single Budget Bill, Delane recognised that the game was up. He advised the Lords to accept the Bill, and greeted the abolition of the "tax upon knowledge" with a grin. "We are sick of the controversy," said *The Times*. "We hope and trust that this will be the very last day of this Paper War, and that from this day forward every Englishman will not only have in his house a cheap Bible, but also a penny newspaper, a Cocker's Arithmetic, a Miscellany, a novel in weekly parts, and a bandbox duty

[1] *Dasent*, i., 224.

[2] The *Daily Telegraph*, started at 2*d.* in June, 1855, and reduced by Mr. Levy to 1*d.* in the following September. Mr. Walter, it is said, was once asked "whether he was aware how much the *Daily Telegraph* was gaining in circulation and popularity. 'Sir,' was Mr. Walter's answer, 'I do not know of the existence of the *Daily Telegraph*.' It was magnificent, but it was not journalism" (G. W. Smalley, "Studies of Men," p. 341).

free." [1] The passage recalls a well-known picture of *The Times* as "a gigantic Sancho Panza, following by an attraction he cannot resist that poor, mad, scorned, suffering, sublime enthusiast, the modern spirit; following it, indeed, with constant grumbling, expostulation, and opposition, with airs of protection, of compassionate superiority, with an incessant by-play of nods, shrugs and winks addressed to the spectators; following it, in short, with all the incurable recalcitrancy of a lower nature, but still following it?" [2] When the paper duty was abolished, *The Times* reduced its price to 3*d.*, at which figure it remained till May 5, 1913, when it was altered to 2*d.*

Matthew Arnold's satire hits off not unfairly the attitude of *The Times* during the Palmerstonian period. In the field of foreign politics Delane, as the friend of Palmerston and the confidant of other Ministers, was, as we have seen, in the thick and very near the centre of affairs; but with the domestic politics of the era the case was somewhat different. He was in touch, it is true, with successive Ministers upon home affairs, and his paper had its view about them. He was as much interested as anybody else in the party game, and his support was eagerly sought. Yet his real influence was less important in domestic than in foreign affairs. The reason is simple. During the Palmerstonian period the modern spirit of democracy was in the making, and Delane was not a democrat. The period, so far as Parliament was concerned, was one of inaction. Some useful things were done, and the administration of public affairs was improved; but the currents of thought, the springs of action,

[1] Leading article, May 28, 1861. See also May 6 and 7.
[2] "Friendship's Garland," p. 159.

which were really vital at this period, flowed outside the walls of Parliament. They were beyond the sphere and sympathy, and even to some extent beyond the ken, of Palmerston and Delane. Palmerston was the man in possession, keeping things for a while as they were, but Bright was the man of the future, and Delane's view was limited to the present. His recalcitrant following of the modern spirit is not very interesting. Yet, from the domestic affairs of this period, some questions and incidents may profitably be selected as illustrating his methods, or throwing light on his powers, or revealing the character and influence of the Victorian journalism in which he was the outstanding figure.

Delane's relations with the Court during the Palmerstonian period are of great interest. Nothing shows more clearly his influence and his independence. We have seen already the importance which the Prince Consort attached to anything said by *The Times* and have noticed the measures which he and the Queen adopted to bring influence to bear upon Delane. They were not very successful, and the Queen was deeply hurt by his line on many subjects. The death of the Prince wrought a change. The well-known lines of Tennyson were the expression of a common feeling :—

> "We have lost him : he is gone :
> We know him now : all narrow jealousies
> Are silent and we see him as he moved," etc.

The Times in its obituary notices did full justice to the Prince's great services to the country of his adoption. The Queen read the articles, and thought them "most beautiful," [1] and commanded that a

[1] *Martin*, v., 229.

letter should be sent to Delane expressing the gratification which all he had said about the Prince had given to her.[1] Delane had at this time a friend at Court in one of the lords-in-waiting, Lord Torrington. He called himself "your Windsor Special," and his private letters fill several pages in Mr. Dasent's "Life of Delane" with lively gossip and outspoken criticism. Lady Ely, a lady-in-waiting, was also a friend of Delane. He gave further pleasure at Court by the sympathetic attitude which he took in regard to the national memorial to the Prince. The Queen sent him all the papers relating to this matter, and was much gratified when he expressed approval of the Albert Memorial Hall. Delane used the favour which he had thus obtained at Court to proffer what is seldom palatable to anybody, and least of all to those in high station—namely, good advice. There were two points which, at this period of Queen Victoria's reign, gave some uneasiness to loyal subjects. One was the position of rigid subordination in which the Queen kept her eldest son. Her Majesty's views and feelings on this subject are known from Memoirs and from her own letters. During the lifetime of the Prince Consort she seems to have been obsessed by a fear lest the Prince of Wales, on reaching man's estate, might divide or dispute the predominance which she desired her husband to maintain as her chief counsellor and permanent Minister. "The Queen is much excited," wrote Lord Granville in 1857, "about a Bill to give the Prince precedence over the Prince of Wales. I asked Stockmar to use his influence to stop it. He agrees with me, but says he

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 40.

has been fighting it for sixteen years." [1] The proposal was dropped, but the feeling which prompted it survived the Prince Consort's death. "I am anxious to repeat *one* thing," wrote the Queen to King Leopold (December 24, 1861), "and *that one* is *my firm* resolve, my *irrevocable decision*, viz., that *his* wishes —*his* plans—about everything, *his* views about *every*thing are to be *my law*! And *no human power* will make me swerve. . . . I apply this particularly as regards our children—Bertie, etc.—for whose future he had traced everything *so* carefully. I am *also determined* that *no one* person, may he be ever so good, ever so devoted among my servants—is to lead or guide or dictate *to me*. I know how *he* would disapprove it. And I live *on* with him, for him; in fact *I* am only *outwardly* separated from him, and *only* for *a time*." [2] The Prince of Wales was in his twenty-first year when his father died, and the Queen's subjects expected to see the heir-apparent occupy in public affairs something of the Prince Consort's place; but the Queen in passionate attachment conceived of her consort as living on in her, and was determined to allow no one else, however near and dear to her, to fill a place which to her touching devotion was only outwardly vacant. The Queen marked her sense of the situation by sending the Prince of Wales, to complete the educational scheme mapped out by his father, on a tour to the Holy Land with Dean Stanley. "Palmerston has given strong advice," wrote Lord Granville (January 16, 1862), "against the Prince being sent to Syria, and I am sure it will be much disapproved by the public." [3] What educational advan-

[1] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 225.
[2] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, iii., 606.
[3] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 406.

tage the Prince derived from Sinai and Palestine is not known, but the expedition produced the most widely read of Stanley's books. Public surprise at the state of tutelage in which the Prince was kept was increased, as time went on, by the rigid seclusion of the Queen herself: a seclusion so long continued as seriously to impair her Majesty's popularity. Delane courageously admonished the Queen on both these points. He suggested, when the Prince returned from the East, that the time had come for entrusting him with some of the duties appropriate to his place in the State. The Pasha of Egypt, whose guest the Prince had been, was then in London, and he ought to be welcomed: if not by the Queen, then by the Prince. "There are many public or semi-public duties," said *The Times*, "which no one else can perform as well, and some, perhaps, which no one else, under a monarchy like our own, can perform at all. . . . The English people will naturally look to the Prince of Wales to give appropriate expressions to their feelings. We do not believe that they will be disappointed, and we feel sure that his Royal Highness, who has won golden opinions as the guest of foreign sovereigns, will know how to greet the friends of England in his own country." [1] This suggestion gave, it seems, no offence. "I think," wrote Lord Torrington to Delane, "your Prince of Wales article has done some good. The Queen feels that you have been very kind, and really, as no one dares to tell her the truth, it is fortunate *you* are able to do so and to be listened to also." Two years later Delane returned to the charge. It was suggested, though without expressly naming the Prince of Wales as the proper

[1] June 17, 1862.

person, that there should be some one to dispense such State hospitality as was rendered by the *Proxenos* in ancient Greece. "The melancholy bereavement," said *The Times*, "under which the Queen has been suffering for the last three years may well excuse her Majesty in the eyes of foreign countries, as of her own subjects, from taking any active part in scenes of ceremony or festivity. But the presence of the Sovereign, although the highest ornament and the most attractive part of the nation's hospitality, is not absolutely indispensable to its exercise." [1] As time went on, the Queen delegated to the Prince of Wales more and more of the formal and ceremonial business which was distasteful to her; but she steadily withheld from him any share in the higher functions of government.[2]

On the Queen's own seclusion during the years following the Prince Consort's death, Delane both privately and publicly exerted his influence in an endeavour to end a state of things which seemed to him not only injurious to the public interest but also dangerous to the monarchical principle. Through his friends at Court he urged that the marriage of the Prince of Wales should be celebrated in London, and that the people should be given an opportunity of

[1] November 2, 1864. This is one of the leading articles which may be compared with Delane's draft of instructions (see *Dasent*, ii., 129—130). A comparison shows how detailed the instructions were (see on this point below, p. 198). Ordinarily, when Delane was in the country, he was content to send instructions to the office or the leader-writer, and to trust his subordinates to carry them out; but when any article concerned royalty, it was, we are told, "his invariable custom" to let nothing appear except after his personal revision (*Dasent*, ii., 130).

[2] Though Lord Russell in 1865 had pressed the Prince's claim to see Cabinet despatches, and in 1872 Mr. Gladstone had urged upon the Queen the desirability of giving official employment to the Prince, it was only in 1892 (again at Mr. Gladstone's instance) that he was regularly supplied with confidential information.

seeing their Sovereign on the occasion. The Queen had decided altogether otherwise, and a correspondence between Lord Torrington and Lady Augusta Bruce on the subject was with the Queen's knowledge sent to Delane. He saw that nothing could be done at present, and in *The Times* made the best of a bad situation. On the day of the Princess Alexandra's arrival he referred, by way of reconciling public sentiment to the Queen's retirement, to "the irreparable loss which on this festive day must be more than ever present to the mind of her Majesty. She cannot, nor can her people, forget her hopes, her happiness and her bereavement" (March 7). The wedding was at Windsor, and the Queen, taking no part in the ceremony, witnessed it from a private gallery. The contrast between the brilliant and happy scene below and the solitary figure of the bereaved Queen is said to have drawn tears from Lord Palmerston, and was the subject also of a sympathetic reference in *The Times*, perhaps suggested by Delane, for he was of the company.[1] The Queen's retirement continued; on three successive occasions she had failed to open Parliament in person; public opinion was becoming ominously discontented. Delane, having been duly sympathetic for a while, decided that the time had come for him to make a public remonstrance. "Her Majesty's loyal subjects," said *The Times* on April 1, 1864, "will be very well pleased to hear that their Sovereign is about to break her protracted seclusion. Various announcements encourage the hope that not only will Buckingham Palace resume its place in the world of life, but that her Majesty will herself reappear

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 64. The account in *The Times* was written by W. H. Russell (*Atkins*, ii., 118).

as its mistress." I do not know what foundation there was supposed to be for these statements. I suspect that Delane here, as often, announced as a fact what he hoped to bring about. The disadvantages of the royal seclusion to dressmakers and trade were touched on, and the article then took higher ground. It was the duty of great persons to show themselves in their appointed places :—

"There are, it is true, men and women who, yielding either to natural taste or to circumstances, shut themselves up and become names and nothing more. There are such who are believed to be models of piety, of goodness and of accomplishments, whose virtues are often alluded to and who are worshipped in a mysterious retirement by a select circle of congenial and interested admirers. But in no position or rank of life is it possible to become this impersonal and mystic being so completely as to lose feelings and be incapable of opinions. The most secluded people cannot make the world of their own complete as to shut out the reality; and they who live ever so much in the past will still find the living intrude. Indeed, they are apt to give way to feelings upon the questions of the day all the more because they have indulged too much in the recollections and all the shadows of a bygone time. . . . They who would isolate themselves from the world and its duties must cease to know and to care as well as to act, and be content to let things take their course. This in effect they cannot do; this they never do; and the only result is a struggle in which they neither live nor die—neither live, as they wish, in the past, nor do their duty in the working world."

Thus bluntly was the Queen told that to take a useful part in the world she must live in it, that it was futile to attempt to exert "an abiding influence on public affairs without appearing as a factor of them." Such language in a responsible print will seem strange to a generation familiar only with sovereigns less amenable to criticism or with newspapers less independent. Nothing, however, is more eloquent of the position

held by *The Times* under Delane than the fact that the Sovereign, after pondering the admonition and hardening her heart against it, decided that the article must be answered, and answered by herself. The Queen's reply appeared on April 6. It was of course not signed; but internal evidence showed at the time whence it proceeded, and particulars are now known. Lord Clarendon, in a letter of April 7, wrote: "Anonyma's *communiqué* to *The Times* yesterday has produced a very painful impression and is considered very infradig. for the Queen. It is her own writing and Grey took it straight from Windsor to Delane. By chance he met Puss [Lord Granville] on the way, who urged him to consult some of the Ministers before the Queen so committed herself, but he would not hear of it." [1] The Queen, it will be seen, insisted on the privilege which her subjects enjoyed of "writing to *The Times*." Her statement, which was given prominence but no heading other than "The Court," was as follows:—

"An erroneous idea seems generally to prevail, and has latterly found frequent expression in the newspapers, that the Queen is about to resume the place in society which she occupied before her great affliction; that is, that she is about again to hold levées and drawing rooms in person, and to appear as before at Court balls, concerts, etc. This idea cannot be too explicitly contradicted.

"The Queen heartily appreciates the desire of her subjects to see her, and whatever she *can* do to gratify them in this loyal and affectionate wish she *will* do. Whenever any real object is to be attained by her appearing on public occasions, any national interest to be promoted, or anything to be encouraged which is for the good of her people, her Majesty will not shrink, as she has not shrank, from any personal sacrifice or exertion, however painful.

"But there are other and higher duties than those of mere

[1] *Maxwell*, ii., 290.

representation which are now thrown upon the Queen, alone and unassisted—duties which she cannot neglect without injury to the public service, which weigh unceasingly upon her, overwhelming her with work and anxiety.

"The Queen has laboured conscientiously to discharge those duties till her health and strength, already shaken by the utter and ever-abiding desolation which has taken the place of her former happiness, have been seriously impaired.

"To call upon her to undergo, in addition, the fatigue of those mere State ceremonies which can be equally well performed by other members of her family is to ask her to run the risk of entirely disabling herself for the discharge of those other duties which cannot be neglected without serious injury to the public interests.

"The Queen will, however, do what she can—in the manner least trying to her health, strength, and spirits—to meet the loyal wishes of her subjects, to afford that support and countenance to society, and to give that encouragement to trade which is desired of her.

"More the Queen *cannot* do; and more the kindness and good feeling of her people will surely not exact from her."

A very human document; very characteristic, too, of the writer. Lord Clarendon, as we have seen, thought it "infradig."; but as no one was more apt to stand on her dignity than the Queen, her insistence upon replying to Delane is the more significant as a measure of his authority. It may be added that no one was quicker than Lord Clarendon to express gratitude for any favour shown to him by *The Times*, or to cry out at unfavourable criticism. Judicious people have, however, often remarked that there is this objection to embarking on controversy with a newspaper, namely, that the editor always gives himself the last word. So it was on the present occasion. For the moment Delane allowed the Queen's reply to pass without comment. He could hardly have done otherwise; but after a decent interval he made his rejoinder. There was some force in the Queen's plea

that she was always busy with affairs of State. At that time the public little understood, what every reader of political memoirs may now know, how indefatigable the Queen was in mastering despatches, and how insistent in advice or expostulation to Ministers. At the very time of her reply to Delane she was overwhelmed, as we heard in the preceding chapter, with work and anxiety in connexion with the Danish crisis. Delane probably knew all this, but he still thought that if the Queen could be induced to abandon something of the luxury of sorrow, she would find strength to perform the public duties which her subjects desired, and at any rate he was convinced that her Majesty's continued seclusion was doing serious injury to her House. Taking occasion of the third anniversary of the Prince Consort's death, he addressed the following leading article to the Queen:—

"In all bereavements there is a time when the days of mourning should be looked upon as past. The living have their claims as well as the dead; and what claims can be more imperative than those of a great nation and the society of one of the first European capitals? . . . No reigning house can afford to confirm in their views those who suggest that the Throne is only an antiquarian relic and royalty itself a ceremony. . . . It is impossible for a recluse to occupy the British throne without a gradual weakening of that authority which the Sovereign has been accustomed to exert. . . . For the sake of the Crown as well as of the public we would therefore beseech her Majesty to return to the personal exercise of her exalted functions. It may be that in time London may accustom itself to do without the palace, but it is not desirable that we should attain that point of republican simplicity. For every reason we trust that now that three years have elapsed, and every honour that affection and gratitude could pay to the memory of the Prince Consort has been offered, her Majesty will think of her subjects' claims and the duties of her high station, and not postpone them longer to the indulgence of an unavailing grief." (December, 15, 1864.)

There the matter rested. Other journals followed Delane's line, but in language of such coarseness and violence that he drew back from pursuing the subject. The Queen, though in 1866 after an interval of five years she opened Parliament in person, continued to work in comparative seclusion. She strongly resented the criticisms made upon her, and was often inclined to reply to them again. "It is not the Queen's *sorrow*," she wrote privately in 1868, "that keeps her secluded to a certain extent. It is her *overwhelming work* and her health, which is greatly shaken by her sorrow. From the hour she gets out of bed till she gets into it again there is work, work, work. Her brain is constantly overtaxed. Could this truth not be openly put before people?" [1] She was thankful that *The Times* at least abandoned the attack, and a few years later Delane was again in some favour with the Queen.[2] In the autumn of 1871 she was seriously ill, and *The Times*, after dwelling upon the incessant nature of her work, went on to say that feelings of devotion to her Majesty "will, perhaps, on the present occasion be mingled with some sentiments of remorse for the reflections which were made during the last session upon the comparative withdrawal of her Majesty from ceremonial appearances in public" (September 14). The Queen took the repentance as felt, where she thought it was due, by *The Times* itself. "The Queen cannot help referring," she wrote to Sir Theodore Martin (September 17), "to the articles in Thursday's *Times*, and in Friday's *Daily News*, which are very gratifying, as these go the length of expressing *remorse* at the heartless, cruel way in which they

[1] "Queen Victoria as I knew Her," by Sir Theodore Martin, p. 29.
[2] See below, p. 237.

had attacked the Queen." [1] At this later period Delane had a fresh link with the Court, for his friend, the Duchess of Sutherland, had been made Mistress of the Robes in 1870.

With Lord Palmerston Delane (as stated already in the preceding chapter) was in constant and confidential communication on home, as on foreign, affairs. The Prime Minister kept the editor regularly informed —sometimes for publication, at other times for guidance, sometimes again with express intimation that the facts were not to be divulged. At the beginning of a session (as in February, 1857) the Prime Minister communicated his plans and warned Delane privately when a dissolution might be expected. When a Royal grant was to be proposed he explained the nature of the proposal, with justificatory arguments, in advance to the editor. He similarly justified the proposed suspension of the Bank Act in November, 1857—an act of policy to which Delane, however, gave only a qualified support (November 13). On the question of national defence and the strengthening of the forces Delane was heartily on the side of the Prime Minister as against his Chancellor of the Exchequer. On a visit to Broadlands Delane was told by Palmerston that he had set his library chimney on fire in the process of burning Mr. Gladstone's letters of resignation on this subject.[2] Delane took a great interest in the Volunteer movement, which received constant support in *The Times*. To Cobden's commercial treaty with France Delane, like some members of the Cabinet which accepted it, was

[1] "Queen Victoria as I knew Her," p. 40.
[2] *Dasent*, ii., 21.

opposed. "Clarendon shook his head," wrote Greville, "Overstone pronounced against it, *The Times* thundered against it." [1] The treaty, said *The Times*, was "an infraction of what are generally considered the established rules of political economy." "Our sensations are those of a garrison which has been informed that a capitulation has been concluded." [2] Palmerston, according to Mr. Gladstone, had been "rather neutral." [3]

The relations between Palmerston and Delane were never closer or more confidential than at this period. The editor constantly saw the Minister in London, and stayed with him at Broadlands. In the middle of 1861 Delane had an affection of the eyes brought on by over-work, and Palmerston, thinking that his friend might be glad to exchange day for night work, offered him an important post in the Government service. He declined and was pressed to reconsider his decision; but though the place—that of Permanent Under-Secretary for War—was one which appealed to some of Delane's strongest interests and would have given large scope for his powers of organisation, he can never have felt any serious hesitation in declining it. The editor of a review said to Lord Morley (who, for his own part, took a slightly more modest view) that he regarded himself as "equal in importance to 75 Members of Parliament." [4] An editor such as Delane had made himself was equal to all the Under-Secretaries put together. Besides, there was his cherished independence to be thought of.

[1] *Greville*, ii., 289. For Lord Clarendon's views, see *Maxwell*, ii., 207—208.
[2] Leading articles, April 6, May 7, 1860.
[3] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 22.
[4] Morley's "Studies in Literature," p. 336.

"My whole life is bound up with the paper," he wrote [1]; "I must either work for it or not at all. My eye is better, and I hope I have before me many years of usefulness; but I can take no fresh service, and least of all sevice which, however kindly offered and however faithfully rendered, would have the look of a job for me and a bribe for the Press." Delane was a man to suggest others for appointments, not to accept one for himself. Lord Palmerston's letters to him show that in various rearrangements of the Administration at this time he was prompt in informing the editor about them, or explaining the reasons for them, and that he often paid attention to suggestions which Delane offered. Delane, however, did not always carry his candidates; and curiously I have noted two instances in which he was defeated by the candidates of another and very different friend of Lord Palmerston—namely, Florence Nightingale. Delane had a candidate for the Viceroyalty of India rendered suddenly vacant in November, 1863, by Lord Elgin's death, but "when Palmerston and I talked it over," wrote the Secretary of State, "he was voted not quite strong enough for the place," and Miss Nightingale's man, Sir John Lawrence, was appointed. Sir Charles Wood in his letter to Delane gave a most interesting account of the laconic terms in which the appointment was offered and accepted.[2] A little earlier in the same year the Secretaryship for War had become vacant by the sudden death of Sir George Lewis. Miss Nightingale moved heaven and earth—the Queen, Lord Palmerston and the *Daily News*—to secure the place for Lord de Grey, and she

[1] To Mr. John Walter: *Dasent*, ii., 27.
[2] See *Dasent*, ii., 80.

won. Delane's candidate was Robert Lowe, then Vice-President of the Council, who considered that he had the best claim if not to that post at any rate to admission to the Cabinet in some capacity or other, and who threatened to resign altogether if the claim were not recognised. Lord Granville, who as President of the Council was Lowe's official chief, begged Delane to use his influence with Lord Palmerston, but it was of no avail, and Delane had hard work in persuading Lowe to withdraw his threatened resignation.[1] Delane recalled what the third Marquis of Lansdowne, the Nestor of the Whigs, had once said to him: "he had never remembered any man being less likely to get a place because he had one to give up."

A large batch of correspondence between the Prime Minister and the editor referred to appointments. After the general election of 1857 Lord Palmerston was puzzled about the choice of a Speaker. Candidates were many, and Delane was asked to favour the Prime Minister with his views. In response he sent a list of the qualifications which he held indispensable, remarked on the various candidates in the light of it, and advised Lord Palmerston that the fittest man to succeed Mr. Shaw Lefevre was Mr. Evelyn Denison. Delane's choice met with general approval, and Mr. Denison occupied the chair for fifteen years. Lord Torrington thought that his appointment at Court was due to Delane's influence. "I live on," he wrote from Windsor (December 23, 1860), "in dread of a change of Government; *but for you* I should not have been here, and I like to feel that so it is. Far more flattering to my vanity than if Palmerston had made

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 64—67; *Patchett Martin*, ii., 231.

me his first thought." The second Sir Robert Peel owed his appointment as Irish Secretary (1861) to Delane's suggestion [1]; and the Duke of Newcastle, in writing to inform Delane of the appointment to the Governor-Generalship of Canada, said (September 1, 1861): "*Your* cock fights, where so many turned tail. Lord Monck accepts Canada." The question of diplomatic appointments, and the qualifications desired in British Ministers and Consuls, led to an interesting controversy between the editor and the Prime Minister. In an article on the death of Palmerston's brother, Sir William Temple, British Minister at the Court of Naples, *The Times* wished to see a successor "chosen from among those statesmen who have taken a leading part in commercial legislation. Sir William Temple, who possessed certain high qualities which fitted him in some measure for the post he so long occupied, was notoriously deficient on all points relating to economic science. Above all, the chief requisite in our new envoy is that he should be possessed of an English mind. We want a man who will represent England, not *Vattel* and the fashions of a continental salon. A diplomatist can only renew his vigour by a roll upon his native earth." [2] The Prime Minister thought all this "just neither to a class nor to an individual," and wrote a vigorous letter of protest to Delane, who rejoined in an equally vigorous defence. He thought that there were great advantages in appointing men of political or commercial experience, rather than in filling all the embassies from the body of professional diplomatists "who from long residence abroad are liable to lose

[1] See the letters from Palmerston and Peel in *Dasent*, ii., 29, 30.
[2] Leading article, September 4, 1856.

their sympathy with home opinions, and either to contract the habits of thought of the place to which they are accredited, or to become such thorough Bohemians as to be impartially neutral among all nations." [1] Delane knew most of the British Ambassadors personally. A friend was reporting the conversation of one of them to him. "Oh that old woman!" was Delane's comment; "yes she's always making love to us, and can be very civil when she likes." [2] A minor diplomatic appointment, which was made at Delane's instance from outside the charmed circle, had at any rate a literary success. This was the appointment of Delane's friend, Laurence Oliphant, as private secretary to Lord Elgin. Oliphant wrote a charming "Narrative of the Earl of Elgin's Mission to China and Japan in the years 1857, '58, '59," and also kept Delane well informed of the progress of events. Of Cabinet and other high appointments the Prime Minister nearly always sent early information to Delane—sometimes with words of explanation and defence. If the object of these was to prevent unfavourable criticisms, it was not always attained—as in the case of Lord Clanricarde mentioned in the preceding chapter. In 1864 there were various Cabinet changes, and Lord Clarendon joined his old colleagues. *The Times* in the course of an article on these changes wrote as follows (April 4):—

"The Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster vacated by the promotion of Mr. Cardwell has been bestowed on Lord Clarendon. We were scarcely prepared to see a Minister who had administered the Government of Ireland in a time of extraordinary difficulty, and who occupied in the Aberdeen

[1] *Dasent*, i., 239.
[2] *Sband*, p. 198.

and in the last Palmerston Government so conspicuous a position as the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, subside into this dignified but sinecure office—the cushion of the Cabinet. Time tries all, however, and Lord Clarendon may not unnaturally wish, after five year's seclusion from public life, to find himself once more in the position of a Minister of the Crown, and to contribute towards the support of a policy which we infer from his acceptance of office has met with his entire approval."

This comment was certainly not flattering, and it made Lord Clarendon so angry that he carried his grievance to the Prime Minister. "I am sure," wrote Clarendon to his wife, "that if Palmerston had taken the ordinary trouble that was due to one who had obliged him, Delane would not have ventured to write as he did. I told Palmerston that in a few lines there was a concentration of everything that was offensive and annoying to me; moreover I said this so sharply that *he* was annoyed, and owned that the article had surprised him very much as he had himself written to Delane to announce the changes, which makes it clear that he either said something disparaging of me himself, or left me to be dealt with by the malignity of Delane or Lowe." [1] The most equable and genial natures may be ruffled by pangs of wounded self-esteem. *Tantæne animis celestibus iræ!* One recalls Mr. Gladstone's remark that suspicion is the besetting infirmity of politicians.[2] In this instance Lord Clarendon's suspicion of the Prime Minister was unfounded. Palmerston's letter to Delane announcing the Cabinet changes (April 3, 1864) has been printed, and the reference in it to Clarendon is cordial: "Lord Clarendon will bring back to the Cabinet his

[1] *Maxwell*, ii., 289—290.
[2] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 642.

skill and experience by taking the Duchy of Lancaster, which he has very handsomely accepted. We are led to hope that this arrangement will be satisfactory to the public, as well as good for the service." [1] That Clarendon's suspicion of Lowe may have been better founded is not improbable; but the fundamental error of Lord Clarendon was in supposing that Delane only "ventured" to write or print what Palmerston desired. Clarendon's equanimity was, however, soon restored, and his vexation did not prevent him from resuming, as of old, the most confidential communication with Delane. Perhaps they met and made it up—a process which between two men of the world, each of genial nature, would not have taken long. Delane, for all his independence, seldom made an enemy and never lost a friend.

On questions of parliamentary reform and what is now called progressive legislation, Delane belonged (as said above) to the school of Palmerstonian Liberalism, which is barely distinguishable from Conservatism. Delane's conservative attitude on such questions, the absurd opinion which he in common with many others held of Cobden and Bright at that time; and on the other hand the intense animosity which Cobden felt towards *The Times*, and, correspondingly, the groundless suspicions which he harboured against Delane: all these things, and some points of incidental interest as well, are involved in a correspondence with Delane which Cobden started at the end of 1863. The sensation caused by it was at the time great, and the affair occupies a long chapter in Lord Morley's "Life of Cobden." The documents

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 101.

are there sufficiently set out,[1] and here a brief summary will serve, for indeed the essential points are not many. In November, 1863, Cobden and Bright made speeches on the land question; calling attention to the divorce of the English peasantry from the land; holding up as the ideal that men should "hold the plough and turn up the furrow upon their own freehold"; and advocating, as the means to reform, not agrarian outrages, but the enfranchisement of the labouring classes. The speeches would be thought exceedingly mild by a taste accustomed to the more pungent fare of later times; but fifty years ago the standard of what horrified a conservative mind was lower than it is to-day, and *The Times* started back aghast from these speeches as if they had been the thunders of the Gracchi. It "might be right to reduce the franchise, but certainly not as a step to spoliation." If Mr. Cobden did not mean that the franchise was to be reduced in order to obtain an assembly which would "seize" on the estates of the rich, and "divide them gratuitously among the poor," what did he mean? Then returning to the subject a few days later, though only in an incidental allusion, *The Times* spoke of "Mr. Bright's proposition for a division among the poor of the lands of the rich."

It was this latter statement which Cobden attacked. When he started the controversy, he had not seen the earlier passages, though they afterwards became involved. Delane by talking about Mr. Bright's "division" had committed a "gross literary outrage"; it was "a groundless and gratuitous false-

[1] Except that Lord Morley gives certain extracts only from Delane's letters. If any reader desires to follow the controversy in detail, he should look at Mr. Dasent's pages (vol. ii., 81—93) as well as at Lord Morley's (vol. ii. chap. xvii.).

hood," "a foul libel," a "stab in the dark" by a "masked assassin," and so forth. Delane replied, and the controversy continued for some days. On the question of the true interpretation of the speeches by Cobden and Bright Delane was palpably worsted. His letters were maladroit and, as it seems to me, sophistical. He began by defending the word "division" as if it stood alone, forgetting that what he had also to defend was the phrases "gratuitous division" and "spoliation." There were moments in the dispute when he might have retired from the controversy with honour and yet have avoided a formal apology; he might have expressed satisfaction at Mr. Cobden's explanations and pleasure in finding that the interpretation put upon the speeches in good faith by *The Times* was erroneous. That he did not take this line was partly due, I suppose, to an absurd convention that it was beneath the dignity of Jupiter ever to admit himself in the wrong.[1] But partly also it may have been due to an unwillingness to concede any point whatever to an opponent who, as we shall see, indulged in personal abuse. As it was, Delane was betrayed into defending an indefensible position. No candid person, reading the documents in cold blood, can think that the speeches of Cobden and Bright were justly susceptible of the interpretation placed upon them in *The Times*.

Nevertheless "congratulations poured in" upon Delane—from "Ministers, dukes and social celebrities" amongst others, says his biographer. Which only shows how quick were the dukes of that day to

[1] Emerson touches this point, which has always been characteristic of *The Times*. "*The Times* never disapproves of what itself has said" ("English Traits," p. 268).

scent a danger ahead: Radical orators of a later time have been more direct in speech. But the others included "working men in Birmingham, Manchester and Rochdale." And this may show one of two things—either that the Conservative working man shared the prejudices of the dukes, or that they were thinking rather of Cobden's personal attacks upon Delane, which passed the bounds, as we shall see, of fair play.

But first a word or two may be given to the humours of this once famous controversy. Every editor is familiar with the actor, the artist, or the writer who never reads the criticisms, but nevertheless has been hurt by something said, or by the fact that nothing was said, in them about him. Cobden in the course of his correspondence with Delane appears somewhat in the same character. "*The Times* never enters my house," he said, "except by rare accident." Considering the constant stream of allusions to *The Times* in his writings and speeches, we must conclude that the accident was not so very rare.[1] Delane made a neat reply. Could he be expected to know that a gentleman who once preferred a single copy of *The Times* "to all the books of Thucydides"[2] did not admit *The Times* to his house? A palpable hit. But Delane had pressed the point much too far. He assumed that Cobden had read the earlier articles, and inferred that because the statements in them had not been contradicted they were accepted. As if the onus

[1] Or that Cobden's visits to his club, where he saw *The Times* (Morley, ii., 428), were frequent.

[2] "I believe it has been said that one copy of *The Times* contains more useful information than the whole of the historical books of Thucydides (laughter), and I am very much inclined to think that to an Englishman or an American of the present day that is strictly true" (Cobden's speech at the Manchester Athenæum, December 27, 1850).

lay always with the person attacked to disprove and not with the attacker to prove! Readers of the present generation will remember an instance belonging to a time later than Delane's in which the same fallacy led the conductors of *The Times* into a more serious blunder. As for the talk about "masked" assassins,[1] I have failed, after diligent study of the correspondence, to catch what Cobden's real point was. When pressed, he did not maintain any objection to the *principle* of anonymity in journalism; Cobden himself, as his biographer tells us, "wrote plenty of anonymous articles." Then what was the point? The comments of the biographer do not on this particular matter give much help towards clearing the issue. There must be some one, we are told, liable to be called to account in the case of persistent and proved misrepresentation. There always is such a one; the responsibility of the editor covers everything that appears in his paper. The state of things is better now, Lord Morley tells us. "The names of all important journalists are now coming to be practically as well known as the names of important members of Parliament, and this change has naturally been followed by that more careful sense of responsi-

[1] John Bright's attack had greater finish and was delivered in a tone of banter. Referring at the Birmingham Town Hall to the controversy, he called Delane the Man in the Mask, and added: "I recollect a description which I am sure will suit Mr. Delane admirably. It was published some time ago in the city of New York, and described a notorious politician there who, if I am not mistaken, has been at the elbow of the New York correspondent of *The Times* for the last twelve months—with what happy success to the forecast and honesty of that paper we all know. It was said of him that 'he was a just man and a righteous man, and he walked uprightly before *the world*, but when he was *not* before the world his walk was *slantindicular*.'" See Thorold Rogers's Collection of the "Speeches of John Bright," vol. ii., p. 339. The speech contains Bright's vindication of Cobden and himself, and further criticism of *The Times* and Delane.

bility which Cobden was quite right in insisting upon." That is as it may be; but where is the change? Is it suggested that Delane's name was not so practically well known in his time as those of later editors in theirs? Is it complained that Cobden did not know whom to be at? The correspondence itself was addressed "to John T. Delane, Esq."

To Cobden's personal attacks Delane sufficiently replied that they were offensive both to himself and his friends, and that he declined to permit *The Times* to be made the means of disseminating imputations which he knew to be unfounded, and which were irrelevant to the question at issue. The nature of the attacks is worth detailing. It shows the depth of animosity to which even the most honourable man may descend in relation to a political opponent. "They," wrote Cobden, "who associate in the higher political circles of the metropolis know that the chief editor and the manager of *The Times*, while still maintaining a strict *incognito* towards the public, drops the mask with very sufficient reasons in the presence of those powerful classes who are at once the dispensers of social distinction and (on which I might have something to say) of the patronage of the Government." It was a public duty "to lift the veil and dispel the illusion by which *The Times* is enabled to pursue this game of secrecy to the public and servility to the Government—a game (I purposely use the word) which secures for its connexions the corrupt advantages, while denying to the public its own boasted benefits, of the anonymous system." In another letter—addressed in this case to the *Daily Telegraph*, which had supported Delane's side in the controversy—Cobden spoke of a "stream of patron-

age" flowing "underground to *The Times*," and of "illicit intercourse carried on between *The Times* and the Government." What Cobden conceived to be his duty had been done by the *Morning Star*, a penny paper which had been established a few years before to support the policy of Cobden and Bright. "People say that Mr. Delane is spending four or five thousand a year and wonder where it all comes from." "People say that potentates of the paper drive a heavy trade sometimes on the Stock Exchange." "First on the list stands John Thadeus Delane. He it is who selects, moves and instructs the mechanical intellect of *The Times* and directs the trained *sbirri* to the mark." These are samples of the anonymous scurrilities which the *Star* was in the habit of launching against Delane. When Cobden talked of masked assassins in *The Times* he would perhaps have done well to look nearer home.

The charges brought by Cobden himself—of "corrupt advantages" accruing from "illicit intercourse" with Ministers and of servility to them—were without justification. Lord Palmerston (as was said above) once offered Delane a Government post, but it was refused. Alexander Knox was a leader-writer on *The Times* when he accepted Sir George Lewis's offer of the police magistracy at Worship Street. Robert Lowe was another leader-writer, and Delane undoubtedly tried to assist his political ambitions, but tried, as we have already heard, in vain. There may have been another case or two; Cobden's biographer refers to a governorship of the Bahamas; but these are flimsy grounds on which to base a charge of corruption. Is it contended that no man who writes for the Press can licitly receive a public appointment,

or suggested that the brilliant gifts of Lord Sherbrooke would never have won for him a place in the Government except for his association with *The Times?* As for the charge of servility on Delane's part, every chapter and page in his life refute it. The charge is as wide of the truth on the one side as is that of "incredible impertinence" on another. Those alone will hit the mark who recognise independence as Delane's leading characteristic.

The same year saw the death both of Delane's opponent and of his ally. Cobden died on April 2, 1865. He and Delane had been personally acquainted before their public controversy. The acquaintance had been both in the way of business (as related in the next chapter) and in that of social intercourse. Delane's friend, "Bear" Ellice,[1] shared the fondness attributed to Lord Houghton for "Heaven and Hell amalgamation parties," and on one occasion Cobden and Delane (with Mr. Henry Chaplin also) were fellow-guests of Mr. Ellice at Glenquoich. Delane had found Cobden "agreeable" and Mrs. Cobden "pleasant." When Cobden died no trace of animosity appeared in the obituary notice which Delane revised for *The Times*. There was incidental reference to his "impatience of contradiction," but he was characterised as "a great man" and "a great benefactor to his country," "a man who was pure and disinterested as well as able."

On October 18, in the same year, Lord Palmerston died. Delane was taking a holiday in Ireland at the

[1] The Right Hon. Edward Ellice (see *Dasent*, i., 225), who has been mentioned above (p. 139), is usually referred to in memoirs as "The Bear" or "Bear Ellice."

time, and was unable to return to London. "One can scarcely say too much," he wrote to his *locum tenens*, "for all parties will conspire to praise him." In the leading article, which was written by Mr. George Brodrick, Lord Palmerston was described as "one of the most popular statesmen, one of the kindliest gentlemen, and one of the truest Englishmen that ever filled the office of Premier." In the memoir, which filled nine columns and which had been revised by Delane before he left London, the encomium was in a higher key. "There never was a statesman who more truly represented England than Lord Palmerston. His name is now added to that splendid but very short list of Ministers, from Walpole to Pitt and from Pitt to Peel, who in times of great difficulty have rendered England prosperous at home and famous abroad, and who, while obtaining place from the Court, have derived their chief power from the country." The language of *The Times* did not exaggerate the impression made by the death of Palmerston. "Death has laid low," wrote Mr. Gladstone, "the most towering antlers in all the forest. All England will be ringing of this great event, and the world will echo England."[1] In England it was not only the death of a man, than whom none since the death of the Duke of Wellington had filled for so long a space so conspicuous a position in the public mind; it was also the close of a political era. It closed, too, a chapter in the life of Delane, and men wondered how he would be able to adapt himself and his paper to the conditions of other men and new forces.

[1] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 152.

CHAPTER VII

PERSONALIA: THE MAN AND THE EDITOR

"Homo sum, et nihil humani a me alienum puto."—TERENCE.

"How do you get to the secrets?" Diana Warwick asked Mr. Tonans. "By sticking to the centre of them," he said. Mr. Meredith was perfectly right. Delane was the best informed man in England for this reason among others, that he was in close touch with the persons and circles where the best information was to be obtained. He cultivated personal relations, as we have seen in preceding chapters, with the leading politicians of both parties; and this, no doubt, is what other editors before and after him have done. What was remarked as distinctive of Delane was the prominent position which he held in general society. When he retired in 1877 Abraham Hayward wrote to him: "To me the manner in which you have combined the editorship with your great social position is simply wonderful."[1] And Disraeli, when he heard the names of likely successors to Delane, asked, "Well, but who will undertake the social part of the business? Who will go about in the world and do all that which Mr. Delane did so well?"[2] Whether he did it well or ill, he did it indefatigably. His diary of engagements is quoted largely in the "Life" of him, and the names of everybody who was anybody during the last century occur in it—royalties, dukes and duchesses, lords-in-waiting at the Court, great ladies

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 335.
[2] "Edmund Yates: His Recollections," p. 330.

who kept salons, no less than those with whom his professional duties would more necessarily bring him into contact, such as Cabinet Ministers, Ambassadors, commanders, political quidnuncs and men of letters. Cobden used to tell his friends, it seems, in scornful tones of the social deference that was paid in private by great people to the editor of *The Times*, and was scandalised to find him dining at tables "where every other guest but himself was an Ambassador, a Cabinet Minister, or a bishop."[1] He would have been yet more scandalised, I suppose, had he known of Delane's social intercourse with leaders of society, sportsmen, *flâneurs*, beautiful and witty ladies, and all the other inhabitants of what is called the great world. During the London season he dined out nearly every night, sometimes as often as on a hundred nights in succession. In the country he stayed in nearly all the great houses, hunting with his hosts and fellow-guests, shooting with them, fishing with them, and sometimes betting with them; generally losing, we are told, "from following the Baron." Sometimes he won and repaid a friend's loss by an innocent journalistic favour. "I won £20 from Rosebery," he wrote from Ascot (June 16, 1870) to his *locum tenens* at Printing House Square, "which makes me anxious to oblige him."[2] So "a little letter" from Lord Rosebery—his first contribution, I imagine, to *The Times*—appeared by order in the "large print," which, I do not doubt, it deserved on its own merits. Delane seldom missed the Derby; never, in his later years, Ascot; and often went to Goodwood. He was a friend of the dictator of the Turf in those days,

[1] Morley's "Cobden," ii., 422.
[2] *Dasent*, ii., 264.

Admiral Rous, whose contributions on racing matters made *The Times* of Delane almost a sporting paper. He took an interest also in agriculture, and used to speak to his friend Disraeli of "we farmers." Whether, by way of returning the compliment, Disraeli spoke of "we sportsmen," I do not know, but it is on record that when he was writing the "Life of Lord George Bentinck" he consulted Delane as to the advisability of including the racing side of his hero's career and that Delane dissuaded him from the perils of such an adventure.

The hospitalities which Delane received were in large measure returned by him. His London house was No. 16, Serjeants' Inn, where, with the assistance of an excellent French cook, he entertained his friends at dinner. He held that six or eight was the proper number for a party. The round table in Serjeants' Inn, which attained a pleasant celebrity among diners-out, was first brought into use on an occasion when, as Delane noted in his diary, "Sir H. Storks, Strzelecki, Laurence Oliphant, Drummond Wolff and General Eber dined with me. Afterwards to Lady Pam's." That may be called a Crimean war party. There was another in honour of the great soldier who quelled the Indian Mutiny; of the company then present to meet Lord Clyde there was until the other day a survivor in Lord Wemyss. Delane liked to mix men of action with men of the pen, and contributors to his paper with politicians and men of the world; though, to be sure, these are cross-divisions, for there were few men, with any title to be heard, who were not at one time and in one way or another contributors to *The Times* of Delane.[1] In 1858 he

[1] Many of his contributors are mentioned elsewhere in these pages;

bought a small freehold property at Ascot Heath, upon which some years later he rebuilt the house. The property had been presented by an admiring Free Trader to Richard Cobden, and from him Delane bought it. This is the explanation of a passage (left obscure in Lord Morley's "Life" of the statesman) in which Cobden, in the course of [illegible] public controversy with Delane, remarked, "You and I know by a joint experience, which neither of us is likely to have forgotten, how great are the obstacles which the law imposes to the free transfer of landed property in this country." Ascot Heath House (which after Delane's death was acquired by the trustees of the Jockey Club) is separated only by the road from the course, and there during the sixties and seventies he used to entertain largely during the races. King Edward, when Prince of Wales, was often his guest on such occasions. In 1864 he obtained royal permission to give a picnic—a dinner and a dance—to a large party of friends at the Belvedere, Virginia Water; it was a great success, and led, he wrote, to "several base imitations." Delane frankly liked the society in which he thus moved, and Cobden's biographer, though he touches the point with some asperity, is pleased to admit that "Mr. Delane had as much right to prefer to spend his evenings among dukes and

among occasional contributors was Thackeray; among those who wrote more regularly and who often had a place at Delane's dinner table were Abraham Hayward and George Venables. Hayward, author of "The Art of Dining," was famous for his own dinners in the Temple; his contributions to *The Times* were mostly obituary notices. Venables, who was as much renowned for charm of character as was Hayward for a "shrewdly biting tongue," is said to have been the original of Thackeray's George Warrington; he was a *Saturday Reviewer*, but contributed also to *The Times* during the greater part of Delane's editorship an excellent annual summary of contemporary history. Among Delane's "special correspondents" was one who would not be thought likely to appear in that *rôle*—Mark Pattison, afterwards rector of Lincoln.

bishops as Cobden had to spend his among manufacturers and merchants." Why "bishops," by the way? Delane seems in fact—so I gather from published notes in his diary—to have found bishops and archbishops a little dull. He much preferred the dukes, especially the witty second Duke of Wellington, "the son of Waterloo," who was for many years one of his intimate friends, and whom he visited so regularly at Strathfieldsaye that "Delane's room" used to be pointed out; and, next to him, the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland, whom he visited every year at Trentham or Dunrobin. Being human, Delane liked the consideration with which great people treated him. He describes (but this was only in a letter to his mother) how, at a dinner at Marlborough House, he had his share, "and rather more, of notice from the royalties. Indeed the Prince had so many afterthoughts as I was going away that he actually shook hands with me four times." [1] He records as an event dining at the Mansion House "in my new uniform" (as Deputy-Lieutenant for Berkshire). Another entry in his diary is: "Dined at the Middle Temple, and was received with much distinction both by the bench and by the students, and was weak enough to be flattered by the applause of men with whom I had so little in common." [2] It was one of the signs of failing health and waning zest for life, as he noted on a day of weariness and despondency, that he had become "careless about society."

But if Delane liked the world of "high life" for its own sake, he liked it, I imagine, the more because the *entrée* to it enabled him, like Mr. Tonans, to "get the

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 197.
[2] *Ibid.*, 321.

secrets by sticking to the centre of them." Even had he not been an editor, he might still have been of Lord Houghton's opinion that "the intimate conversation of important men is the cream of life"; but to Delane of *The Times* such conversation had a professional as well as an æsthetic or epicurean value. But let me not be misunderstood. He was not a gossip. He hated "personal journalism." It was for political and other news of serious importance that he kept his ears open. I have described in an earlier chapter how promptly he turned to good use in his paper a remark dropped in the hunting field.[1] Another instance of such skill has been recorded. Meeting his doctor, Sir Richard Quain, one afternoon at the Athenæum, he talked, I suppose, of the weather, and the conversation passed to different climates and their effects on different constitutions. At any rate, the doctor chanced to say that he had just been telling Lord Northbrook, in reply to an inquiry, that a hot climate might suit a delicate girl very well. The next morning it was announced in *The Times* that Lord Northbrook had been appointed to succeed Lord Mayo. The new Viceroy of India received at once many congratulations, which he had to declare quite premature: "how *The Times* got hold of it I cannot imagine, for no one but myself and Gladstone have even discussed it."[2] A clever hit by Delane; though conceivably his friend may have intended to drop a timely hint. Such was certainly the case when Disraeli, a few days before his translation to the House of Lords, said to Delane: "My session will be over on Friday, August 11. I shall go to Osborne on

[1] Above, p. 51.
[2] *Dasent*, ii., 290.

the 12th, and I shall not return to the House of Commons." [1] Delane thought he meant only that he should not return for the prorogation, and Delane scored nothing by his friend's oracular hint. A palpable miss! But this was in 1876, when Delane's powers were failing. In his prime, no man was ever more alert, in body and in mind. He showed the eagerness of his nature, says Kinglake, "not in the weak, bustling way of people reckoned for nothing, whose time is of scarce any worth; and indeed he had the outward composure, the air of power not yet put forth that becomes a strong man of action; but it always could be seen that his energies were rather compressed than lulled." [2] His attitude in general society has been described by another writer as that of "an observant silence"; but he knew how to make himself generally agreeable, and at the dinner table or in the smoking-room he was an interesting talker. "He used generally," we are told, "to bend conversation in such a way as to avoid coming into dispute with his comrades, and liked best to reinforce what they said by conveying in anecdote some fragments of that rare knowledge concerning men and their motives with which he was always abundantly armed." [3] "Brilliant in society, as social brilliance is sometimes reckoned, Mr. Delane never was. He was not a professional humourist; he was not a flashy joker; he had a mortal hatred of punning flippancy. His conversation was impressive rather than sparkling; his sentences seemed charged, as it were, with the condensed results of a long and varied

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 327.
[2] "Crimea," vii., 218.
[3] *Kinglake*, vii., 216.

experience." [1] Snatches of his table-talk, recalled by his nephew, or preserved in Sir William Russell's diary, illustrate these general descriptions. At the date reached in our last chapter Delane had been editor of *The Times* for a quarter of a century. Few men in London, if any, could have accumulated so rich and various a store of secrets from the *coulisses* of the political stage, or have known so many famous men in different walks of life, or have seen so deeply into the alternate littleness and greatness of human nature. He could tell, from personal knowledge, of the rivalries or the public spirit of statesmen; of the vicissitudes of fallen Kings; of the secret machinations of a ruling Emperor. "It was a rare experience," writes a friend of Delane, "to have his arm up St. James's Street in the session when the stream was setting of a summer afternoon towards the House, and to listen to his amusing commentary of anecdote and reminiscence, interspersed with incisive sketches of characters and careers, suggested by passing personalities." [2] Then, too, Delane had travelled a good deal and was not without the special correspondent's eye or the descriptive writer's quickness in seizing points of character. After his visit to the Crimea he went to Constantinople, as already related,[3] and saw Lord Stratford de Redcliffe. The British Ambassador, in thanking Lord Clarendon for the introduction, gave these impressions of the talk and manner of his guest:

"It pleased me particularly to find that Mr. Delane is not the *flashy* man which at a distance might have been

[1] Mr. Alfred Austin in the *Standard*, November 25, 1879.
[2] *Sband*, p. 197.
[3] Above, p. 80.

imagined. He is evidently a close observer, and his talent for description, though not flowing in expression, is vivid enough to impress the mind forcibly as well as agreeably with whatever he has to narrate. His recital of what he has seen and heard will be worth a score of despatches. The landing—when Lyons had only a few inches of water under his keel and his men were up to their chins in surf, handing out regiments, squadrons of cavalry and battering trains with equal ease; the first night after landing, when 25,000 men stood without tents, or fires, on a muddy table-land in a storm of wind and rain; Lord Cardigan's razzia on a grand sweep while the French cleared everything away by making an inner circle without his leave or knowledge; and lastly the horrors of a ship where hundreds died from its being overcrowded with invalids, are too real not to be related to you in his best manner." [1]

Delane knew, then, how to make himself interesting. "My right honourable friend has observed," said Lord Palmerston in his defence of Delane against Mr. Horsman, "that the contributors to the Press are the favourites and the ornaments of the social circles into which they enter. In that opinion he is, it seems to me, perfectly correct. The gentlemen to whom he refers are, generally speaking, persons of great attainments and information. It is, then, but natural that their society should be agreeable. My acquaintance with Mr. Delane is exactly of that character." [2] "Delane's genial nature inclining him," Kinglake explains, "to let comrades share the elixir by hearing the things he could tell them, his society, as may well be supposed, and this especially at critical periods, was beyond measure interesting to men who cared eagerly for the actual state of the world. What he said bore so closely on the actual march of events, that his speech had the kind of zest which attaches to the words of a commander or statesman when going

[1] "Life of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe," by Stanley Lane Poole, 1888, vol. ii., p. 369.

[2] *Hansard*, May 7, 1860.

to pass into action, and it sometimes gave to his hearers the small, yet not despised, pleasure of being by several hours in advance of the rest of the world." This is a shrewd observation, but does not entirely touch the point. Delane gave freely because, I imagine, he wanted to receive freely. The way to get information is to give it; the way to learn more, as every diplomatist and editor are aware, is to know, or at least to seem to know, much already. Delane's sources of information were, as we have seen already, both many and various. He had friends in all parties; acquaintances and correspondents in all capitals; volunteers who acted as his eyes and ears in many circles, from the Court, where he had his "Windsor Special," to the lobbies. Information which he had from one quarter he often passed on to another. In the record of his life, I have noticed how often he sent early information by private notes to Ministers and other friends. He thus sent, for instance, the first news of the French Revolution of 1848 to the Duke of Wellington; of the movements of M. Guizot to Lord Aberdeen; of events in India and America to Lord Palmerston; of Ministerial changes, or rumoured changes, to various politicians. In such cases he received back his own, I do not doubt, with usury. One can well understand that what he did not like was to be told things with some reservations "in confidence." "I don't much care to have confidential papers sent to me at any time, because the possession of them prevents me from using the information which from one source or another is sure to reach me without any such condition of reserve." [1]

[1] To Sir John Rose, 1860 (*Dasent*, ii., 3).

Macaulay, in his famous chapter on the "State of England in 1685," describes how in those days every man of the upper or middle class went daily to his coffee-house to learn the news and to discuss it; how every coffee-house had its orators to whom the crowd listened with admiration, and who soon became, what the journalists of a later time have been called, a fourth estate of the realm; and how, next, the writers of newsletters rambled from coffee-house to coffee-house, collecting reports, picking up hints, listening to words which fell from the orators. In the England of the fifties and the sixties *The Times* took the place of the orators and the newsletters; and Delane went into society, as his forerunners went to the coffee-houses.

The round of society and daily dining out is exhausting, and many people find it occupation enough for their life. With Delane it was only a part, and though an important, yet only the smaller, part of his daily work. He was as unremitting at the office as he was indefatigable in society, and Abraham Hayward's wonder how Delane managed to combine the two things deserves examination. How was it done? At a great expenditure of nervous and physical energy is the first answer. During his active years he enjoyed good health for the most part; his constitution must have been strong; and he took much exercise on horseback. "I am extravagantly well," he wrote during his visit to the Crimea in 1854; "nothing seems to hurt or tire me . . . always up at daybreak, eat, drink and sleep like a topman." And from Printing House Square in 1863: "There is a good deal of work, but it comes easy. I am very well and dine out every day."[1] "I dined at Green-

[1] *Dasent*, i. 188; ii., 79.

wich with Delane," wrote Dickens to Macready in 1869; "he asked me about you with much interest. He looks as if he had never seen a printing office, and had never been out of bed after midnight."[1] Perhaps he presumed too much on the strength. Delane was a very young man when he began work on *The Times*, and he broke down under the strain at an age, as we shall learn in a later stage, when many public men have still a decade, or even more, of unimpaired energy before them. Palmerston died at 81, and was in full force of mind and body to the end. Delane died at 62, and had been a broken man for some years before. Other answers to Hayward's question are to be found in some special methods of Delane's editorial work and in conditions of journalism in his time. The conditions are very different to-day, and I doubt if any modern editor lives, or could live, as did Delane. But, first, let us follow him from society to his office, and describe a day, and a year, in the life of the great editor. Others may be as interested, as was Diana Warwick, in seeing Mr. Tonans "in the very furnace-hissing of events."

Delane rose about noon; made breakfast his luncheon; and proceeded to pay a few morning calls. Lord Aberdeen was in town, and wished to ingeminate peace; or Lord Palmerston had begged the editor to call and hear about the prospects of war; or there was some point affecting the City which might be cleared up in New Court; or Mrs. Norton was late with her review, and must be chidden. A call on Lord Clarendon or Lord Granville could be postponed, for if there was as yet no letter from either of them, it was sure to

[1] *Letters of Charles Dickens*, ii., 425.

come before the day was over. So perhaps there would be time for Delane to go to Eaton Place and see his mother, to whom he was devotedly attached, and who took a constant interest in all that concerned him. She would like to hear that he had met the Comte de Paris at Lady Waldegrave's last night; or she would be amused by Lord Palmerston's latest saying. "Now you could not have done that," Delane had said to the Prime Minister, when Lord Derby's translation of the "Iliad" came out. "Perhaps not," was the reply; "I have quite enough to do with translating bishops." Delane's morning visits were always paid on horseback, with a groom in attendance to hold the horse while the master went indoors. Even in these days of tubes and motors, one still sees sometimes a banker driving a smart phaeton and pair to the City; but Delane was probably the last man who rode through Fleet Street to the West End. He explained once to a friend that if he started to walk from Fleet Street along the Strand to Pall Mall he would never get there, as so many people would buttonhole him; but on his horse, which he rode slowly, he could greet them and go on.[1] It was a proud moment for an old retainer of *The Times*, who used to be fond of recalling it, when he saw the editor *riding* down Whitehall with a duke *walking* on each side. On his return to Fleet Street, bringing back information with him, Delane began the heavier part of his day's work. His house at Serjeants' Inn was within a few minutes' walk of Printing House Square, so that he would sometimes work at home and sometimes at the office.

During the day there were three main branches of editorial work to be done. First, there were the

[1] *Wace*, p. 7.

letters to be read; the day's postbag often contained as many as 200; and they came from all sorts and conditions of people and from all parts of the world: some containing information intended for the editor's private use only (as from his correspondents abroad, from political friends at home, or from strangers making suggestions); others intended for publication. Then, as now, the correspondence column of *The Times* was one of the principal features; it was a paper which a man was obliged to see lest he should miss some communication from an important person. Sometimes Delane employed a subordinate to sift the letters for him, putting aside the chaff from the corn; but I imagine this was only done when he was exceptionally busy. A good editor glances at all the correspondence himself. The sense of values in such things comes only with full experience. Besides, it is the editor alone who holds all the threads, who knows what the paper is going to do and say to-day and to-morrow; you never can tell in what letter, seemingly of little importance, there may not be the suggestion of some point which would strengthen a case, or a clue worth pursuing, or a hint significant of much. As for the selection of letters for publication, Delane kept that always in his own hands. "I have made MacDonald sift letters for me," he wrote; adding, "I don't let him give out any, of course."[1] The receipt of a large letter-bag means the despatch of a large one also, and Delane was a most industrious letter-writer. Like most of the public men of his day, he conducted the greater part of his correspondence by his own hand; it seems to have been only towards the end of his editorship that he employed a private secretary.

[1] *Dasent*, i., 162.

Next to dealing with the correspondence came the task of preparing the make-up sheet; that is, of scrutinising the "list," as it is called in Delane's letters—the list of articles in stock, and of the day's necessary commitments—and of deciding how to cut and arrange the coat according to the cloth. There are few departments of editorial work which require better judgment and sense of proportion than this, and there is none which more often brings an editor into collision with his contributors. "There is nothing so entirely wonderful to anybody who has to work a newspaper," wrote Delane to Sir William Russell, "as the way in which the public ignore all its difficulties. But *you* ought to know something of them, and yet you expect to see the abstract of your boy's letter and a review of Lord Ronald's book in the same paper with the report of a debate which occupies fifteen columns. Why, the list last night presented 72 columns of which 70 were thoroughly good matter, and these had to be reduced to 48 by a process compared with which that little business of Herod's was a joke. At the same time the Duke of Sutherland thinks it very hard I can't put in two columns about his steam plough, and 50 correspondents demand each *as a matter of justice* that their letters shall be inserted. All this while the *Spectator* complains every week that the debates are not reported at sufficient length, and MacDonald that we never get in any advertisements!"[1] When it has been decided *what* is to go in, the question remains *where?* I have known an editor of a morning paper who used to answer this question, so far as the principal pages were concerned, himself; going up to "the stone" (where the columns are made up

[1] *Atkins*, ii., 249.

into " formes ") and there ordering the arrangement of head-lines, columns, and so forth. But this is a reminiscence of a later day than Delane's, and I do not suppose that he troubled himself greatly about such matters. The arrangement of newspapers in his time was very much an affair of routine. Conspicuous head-lines and other devices for display are refinements, or vulgarisations (for both views are held), of the art of newspaper production, which were unknown in the days of *The Times* under Delane. To him, however, was due the introduction of a " table of contents," and there are letters from him to his subordinates which show that he kept a craftsmanlike eye on such technical matters as spacing and " leading."

The third main branch of his work during the daytime was what he sometimes called facetiously " feeding his ravens "—that is, the issue of instructions to correspondents, reporters, reviewers, and the allotment of subjects (with instructions also) among the leader-writers. That was prospective; in the way of retrospect, there were often letters of approval or of admonition to be written. Upon Delane's dealing with leaders and the leader-writers there will be something more to say presently; it was one of the most arduous and difficult of his tasks; but upon the other departments of the paper also he kept a vigilant eye and a firm hand, and brought to bear an admirably sane and shrewd judgment, in the case of things small and large alike. In 1849 there was a sensational murder case which was attracting much public attention. " I should be obliged," wrote Delane to his reporter, " by your giving a very full report of Baron Rolfe's charge in Rush's case. It is

generally a fashion in circuit reports"—it is a bad fashion now in many journalistic law reports—"to pay very little attention to this part of the proceedings, but it is really of the utmost importance to the result of the trials. Of course I do not wish to have the mere repetitions of evidence, but Rolfe's opinion upon the relative value of testimonies will be well worth having."[1] The same reporter was employed during the railway mania to provide accounts of the proceedings before the various parliamentary committees. Delane scrutinised the reports closely, and on one occasion admonished his subordinate thus: "You have been unfortunate in entrusting the most important matters to the worst man."[2] His letters of instruction, advice, and criticism addressed to his foreign and war correspondents were admirable. They cannot, however, be illustrated by any short extracts; many of them are given *in extenso* in Mr. Dasent's "Life of Delane," and by Mr. Atkins in his "Life of Sir William Russell." He was equally to the point in instructions or criticisms addressed to reviewers. He would complain if a review were full only of small points of detail and contained "no such general summing up of the book as the public would naturally expect." He thought that the business of a daily newspaper was to give news; that a book was a form of news; that a notice of it should give the views of the author as well as those of his reviewer. He had no use, in *The Times* at least, for the kind of review which aims primarily at displaying the airs and graces of the critic. George Meredith was among the writers whose talents were quickly recognised by Delane, and

[1] *Atkins*, i., 81.
[2] *Atkins*, i., 53.

Ruskin said of a long notice of "The Stones of Venice" that it was "incomparably the best critique he had ever had."[1] If a book were of importance, and a proper appreciation of it required a wide knowledge of politics and persons, Delane would sometimes prime the selected reviewer at a dinner of experts.[2] Independent in all things, he set his face, too, against literary log-rolling. Disraeli begged to be allowed to nominate his own reviewer for the "Life of Lord George Bentinck." Delane wrote such a letter in reply as caused Disraeli to apologise promptly for his "stupid suggestion."[3]

When the correspondence had been dealt with and the make-up provisionally settled, and the "ravens" fed, Delane's preparatory work for the next morning's paper was done, and he was free to mount his horse again. If there was business of special importance or interest in Parliament, he would ride down to Westminster (as many members also were then in the habit of doing) and hear the debate until dinner-time. At other times he rode in the Row, where again he would have an opportunity of meeting his friends. Then home to dress for dinner. Soon after 10 o'clock he would quietly slip away, and by half-past 10 or 11 at latest he was at his desk in the office of *The Times*, remaining there till 4 or 5 in the morning. In Delane's time the morning papers did not go to press till about 5 o'clock, the newspaper train to the North leaving Euston at 6.15 a.m.[4] And

[1] The review was in three parts, September 24, October 1, and November 12, 1853. A three-column review of "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel" appeared on October 14, 1859.

[2] See *Sband*, p. 197.

[3] See *Dasent*, i., 123.

[4] In 1875 the train was put forward to 4.55 a.m.

this was one of the conditions referred to above, which made it possible for Delane to combine the life of society with that of editor. At the present day the papers go to press many hours earlier, necessitating of course a much earlier attendance of the editor on the preceding evening. Occasionally Delane left the office earlier than stated above, and was in time to put in an appearance at balls in the West End. But even a man of his buoyancy and good constitution could not have stood such a *finale* to his day's round very often.

The night work—10.30 p.m. to 4 or 5 a.m.—was the most arduous of all. Kinglake has given an account of it which will need only a little supplement :—

"When already in his carriage and moving to the scene of his midnight labours, kind nature used to grant Mr. Delane some minutes of sleep, upon which, because giving fresh strength, he used to set great value; but from the moment of his entering the editor's room until 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning, the strain he had to put on his faculties must have been always great, and in stirring times almost prodigious. . . . These were the hours of night when often he had to decide—to decide of course with great swiftness—between two or more courses of action momentously different; when besides, he must judge the appeals brought up to the paramount arbiter from all kinds of men, from all sorts of earthly tribunals; when despatches of moment, when telegrams fraught with grave tidings, when notes hastily scribbled in the Lords or the Commons, were from time to time coming in to confirm, or to disturb—perhaps even to annul—former reckonings; and these, besides, were the hours when—on questions newly obtruding, yet so closely, so importunately present that they would have to be met before sunrise—he somehow must cause to spring up sudden essays, invectives, and arguments which only strong power of brain with even much toil could supply. . . . And, of course, labours fraught with great consequences to numbers of mortals could not long go on uninterrupted by molestation from without. Because of some insistant below, great in name or mighty in earnestness, the

janitors charged to protect a great editor's too precious moments would from time to time be importuned to take in a card with eager words written in pencil; and amongst the missives thus pressed, there used to be now and then one which could not be safely despised, nor even indeed withstood."

Perhaps here, as so often elsewhere, Kinglake heightens the colours somewhat; he was writing with a purpose—namely, in order to suggest that Delane had not the time to exercise due care in censoring what his special correspondent sent from the Crimea. Habit, however, makes easy what to the uninitiated may seem almost impossibly difficult. Delane worked easily at night and neglected nothing, reading all the proofs, revising the leaders, correcting or recasting matter by the light of the latest information. "I was fortunate enough," writes a contributor to *The Times*, "to have the friendship of successive editors, and of all editors I knew, Delane was the most remarkable. His instinctive perception, his sagacious prescience of the tendency of events was only paralleled by his prompt decision. A message coming in at the last moment, pregnant with issues in foreign politics or home affairs, never found him unready. On one momentous occasion I had expressed my wonder and admiration to his brother-in-law, Mowbray Morris; for although utterly taken by surprise, a few days had justified his action. Morris's answer was 'It is those flashes of sure intuition that save him; if he were in in the habit of hesitating he would often be blundering.'"[1] In this respect "both in his youth and middle age he reminded those who knew him best," said Sir George Dasent, "of the character given by Thucydides of Pericles that 'he was by his natural

[1] *Sband*, p. 199.

intelligence, without the help of instruction before or after, the best judge, on the shortest deliberation, of any matter on hand, and also the ablest forecaster of what the issue would be.' " [1]

Such was the regular routine of a day and night in the life of the great editor. Of course he took holidays. Sometimes he allowed himself a day off, and went out hunting with the Old Surrey foxhounds or the Queen's staghounds. When he had built himself a new house at Ascot he would often run down for a night or two, conducting the business of the paper by post or messenger. In several years he spent a few days after Christmas with the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland. Occasionally he spent a week or two in Paris, staying with Lord Cowley or other friends. But his regular holiday was taken when Parliament rose, and usually lasted for five or six weeks. He often spent it on the Continent—travelling sometimes with his father and mother or with one of his brothers, and sometimes with friends such as Laurence Oliphant, Lord Houghton, and General Eber. Sometimes the travels were of curiosity and relaxation, like those of any other tourist. But often he took the opportunity of conferring with his foreign correspondents, of staying with British Ambassadors, of making the acquaintance of foreign statesmen. He was interested, as has been said already, in military matters; in one year he took a house at Salisbury in order to attend the manœuvres on the Plain; in another he visited some of the battlefields of the Franco-German war. Sometimes his autumn holiday was spent in Ireland. Occasionally he took his horses and made a driving and riding tour in England.

[1] *Macmillan*, January, 1880.

During his later years he generally spent it in a series of visits to country houses or shooting-boxes in Scotland. Like a famous Prime Minister, he claimed some sort of affiliation to each part of the United Kingdom. He was "a Welsh [1] Irishman," he once said, "domiciled in England but strongly attached to Scotland."

Such was the routine of a day and night, such the ordering of a year, in the life of the great editor. I come back to Abraham Hayward's expression of wonder. How did Delane manage to combine the editorship with his great social position? I think, for one thing, that he took more of holiday, that he found it possible to have more absence from the drudgery of his profession, than has fallen to the lot of some other editors. The pace has been much quickened in journalism since his time; the range of a newspaper's interests has been widened, and the competition has become keener. But there is a second consideration, and this is of more interest in a study of Delane. There have been editors, both before and after him, who have done all that he did at the office of the newspaper and have added to it a great deal of writing in the paper. Delane found time and energy for a full life in society because he was an editor who did not write. This fact has sometimes been put too absolutely, as in the statement that he never wrote even one leading article. It seems that he wrote a few. That he did not write habitually was not due to inability to write. The articles known to be from his pen are as good as the others. His letters of travel, printed in his "Life," are lively, though not very penetrating; in the letters of instruction or criticism sent to members of

[1] His paternal grandmother was Welsh.

his staff he shows himself the master of a terse, vigorous, and epigrammatic style. He chose, however, not to write leading articles himself, and as this fact was known some erroneous conclusions have been drawn. It often causes amusement to those behind the scenes of the journalistic stage to learn, on the very best authority in each case, how many different editors a newspaper has at one and the same time. Mr. A.'s friend Mr. B. is the editor, but so is Mr. C.'s friend Mr. D., and so forth. I do not know that any one ever claimed to share the editorship of *The Times* with Delane; but many persons other than he claimed, or were reputed, to be really and ultimately the directors of its policy. Kinglake seems to hint that Delane was the tool of the chief proprietor; the relations between the two men are discussed in a later chapter, and were not what Kinglake suggests. Politicians asserted—with how little truth has been already shown—that Delane was the subservient instrument of Lord Aberdeen at one time, of Lord Palmerston at another; and lastly there were those of whom it was supposed, and who sometimes themselves held the supposition, that because theirs was the pen theirs also was the direction of policy. Chief among the latter number was Henry Reeve (leader-writer from 1840 to 1855), a man of marked ability, of many powerful friends, of great influence and perhaps of yet greater self-sufficiency. Delane in speaking of his intimates used to call Reeve "Il Pomposo," and the Don's claim to direct the policy of the paper led to his overthrow. His biographer says, a little naïvely, "when the acting editor claimed the right to discuss foreign questions in accordance with his own opinions rather than in accordance with those

of his powerful contributor, Reeve felt that it was time to withdraw; and he did so." [1] As if any editor (and in an editor's absence the acting editor *is* the editor) would tolerate such pretensions as the powerful contributor's apologist here puts forward! What really happened was this: In September, 1855, as already related, Delane went abroad for a holiday, leaving Dasent in charge of the paper. Reeve at once began writing in a very offensive tone to Dasent, complaining that "trashy" articles were being published on subjects which from their delicacy could only be well dealt with by himself (Reeve). He complained later on to Dasent of an article (by Lowe) on the marriage of the Princess Royal, and declined to contribute any longer to the paper "under your management." It does not appear that he desired to withdraw from *The Times* altogether. What he sought to do, presuming on the supposition that he was indispensable, was to evict Dasent. Therein he counted without Mr. Walter. Reeve sent to Mr. Walter letters from Lord Clarendon and Charles Greville, in which it was suggested that Reeve's loss would be irreparable and that "Dasent should be removed from his post without scruple or hesitation." Mr. Walter at once terminated Reeve's engagement.[2] Delane's comments, when he heard of the affair, were given in a letter to Dasent:

"I regret the quarrel, because I hate all quarrels, and perhaps the same cause of difference would not have produced one if I had been concerned—not that my conduct would have

[1] *Laughton*, i., 338.

[2] Sir James Laughton (1898) naturally accepted Reeve's own account of the affair. Sir Herbert Maxwell, in his "Life of Lord Clarendon" (1914), follows suit; less excusably, since the full correspondence, summarised above, had already (1908) been given to the world in Mr. A. I. Dasent's "Life of Delane," i., 213—222.

been unlike yours, but that Reeve would have abstained from anything offensive to me, though he thought he might bully you with impunity if not success. However, as Palmerston said at Romsey, there are some things more intolerable even than quarrelling, and, much as I hate it, I would rather quarrel with a whole parish of Reeves than submit to such insolent assertions as his letters display. He just wanted to job the paper to his own purposes, to prove to his patrons that he was supreme and to receive their pay in flattery and dinners while he was taking ours in hard cash."

Any editor of long experience who has never known a contributor of that kind may probably be accounted fortunate.

"I am delighted" [continued Delane] "you found such a cordial supporter in John Walter. His entire 'loyalty' in all such cases is beyond praise. So much for the quarrel itself. As to its results, I don't think the paper will lose more than it will gain by Reeve's withdrawal. Certainly he was a most ready writer, always willing to work, with a great deal of information and much adroitness in using it; but he was a thorough jobber, and never thought himself repaid for his labour unless he sold it twice over. His dynastic tendencies, or rather those of his patrons, have led us into endless scrapes and contradictions, and constantly made us the advocates of an unpopular and anti-national policy. In losing him no advantage of judgment will be lost, for no man was ever more inclined to take the wrong line, and Chenery will more than supply his place as a writer."

Delane's hatred of a quarrel led to peace with Mr. Reeve presently; and though he ceased to write leaders, he often in later years sent Delane information and was an occasional contributor in other ways to the paper.

A storm in a teacup, perhaps; yet, in a study of Delane and his *Times*, the correspondence is of capital importance. The affair illustrates for one thing the loyalty of the proprietor to the editor. It shows that both alike were of independent spirit, determined to

resist and resent outside interference. It illustrates also Delane's attitude to his leader-writers and his treatment of the idea that it was for them, and not for him, to direct the policy of the paper. But Delane's letter suggests, I think, something else as well; namely, a certain disadvantage which is suffered by an editor who does not write. Of course, no conceivable editor could write all the leading articles in *The Times* or in any other of the morning papers as they used to be; but many an editor has written one a day, especially at critical times. Delane, as a rule, wrote none; his might be the controlling mind; but for the expression of his mind he relied upon the minds and pens of other men, and sometimes—as he discloses in the letter to Dasent—his own judgment was overborne in the process. This occurred, it seems, often in the case of Mr. Reeve's articles; but not so often, in that or in any other case, as might at first thought be deemed probable. Delane, in deputing the actual expression of the editorial mind to others, had four safeguards: initiative, selection, instruction, revision. His own letters and the correspondence and reminiscences of members of his staff show how closely he guarded his defences.

The first of these consisted in keeping the initiative exclusively in his own hands. While Delane was editor of *The Times* no one could obtain the insertion of an article written of his own motion or at the suggestion of others. A leader-writer, who had been given no subject for several days, once ventured, at the instance of a person of high distinction who was a great friend of Delane, to write an article and offer it for insertion. Delane immediately returned it:

"because it is, I assure you, essential that whatever is to

appear in *The Times* should proceed from the initiative of whoever holds my place, and not from that of any other person, however highly esteemed. The effect of any divergence from this principle would be to deprive your contributions of any value, and to prevent their being accepted as embodying the opinions of *The Times*, which must, believe me, be those of no other than yours faithfully,

"JOHN T. DELANE."[1]

A second line of defence was the selection of the right or the safe man for each given subject. When an editor has a large staff to choose from this is a duty which calls for a good deal of tact and knowledge of idiosyncrasies. There was a leader-writer, for instance, whose identity is thinly concealed by Delane's biographer under the letter "C." He had what Delane thought a "twist" in favour of the possibility of early mediation during the Franco-German war. Delane was out of town for a few nights, and wrote to his assistant:

"The Cabinet to-day unanimously decided against this fretful policy, and it is no use snapping at them about it. But if you give C. a chance he will. He is, however, very good to write upon any question connected with the war into which neither mediation nor the conditions of peace enter."[2]

The same writer was very keen upon minority representation; sometimes he was, and sometimes he was not, given an opportunity of riding his hobby; it was as the policy of the paper at different times decided. Another famous leader-writer was Robert Lowe. He accepted Delane's offer of a post in 1857 with a modesty of limitation, not universal among members of the craft. "Mr. Lowe will be very happy to undertake to write for *The Times* on

[1] *Wace*, p. 4.
[2] *Dasent*, ii., 271.

any subject on which he possesses sufficient information." If all writers for the Press were thus conscientious, there would be no sting left in Leslie Stephen's definition of journalism as "writing for pay upon matters of which you are ignorant."[1] Lowe continued to write leaders for some years after he had a place on the Ministerial bench. Delane liked his trenchant articles. He it was who wrote the article which, as related above, moved Henry Reeve to try conclusions with Delane's acting editor. The article (October 3, 1855) criticised Prussian policy as subservient to Russia, and then went on in words which may be read with interest to-day:

"We make these remarks not with a view to exciting any ill-feeling between this country and Prussia, but because they happen to have an immediate bearing upon a very delicate and interesting subject. On the very day on which we announced the capture of Sebastopol it also transpired that Prince Frederick William of Prussia had arrived at Balmoral for the purpose of 'improving his acquaintance with the Princess Royal.' The people of England has no wish to improve its acquaintance with any Prince of the House of Hohenzollern."

Reeve was in terror lest he should be held responsible at Court for this sentence, and could not be comforted till Lord Clarendon promised to "put him right with the Queen and Prince."[2] Delane, who cared no more for the frowns of the Court than for those of Ministers, applauded the article; but Lowe's pen was sometimes too mordant for him. Lowe attacked Louis Napoleon too bitterly and too continuously even for Delane's taste. "I think we have picked that bone pretty bare," he wrote, "and shall

[1] *Letters of J. R. Green*, p. 66.
[2] *Maxwell*, ii., 101.

do ourselves instead of him injury if we continue to abuse him." John Bright, too, was a red rag to Lowe, and Delane had to warn him off any subject which involved "the tribune of the people"; and presently a more general interdict was pronounced by the editor: "Pray do not let Lowe write any more upon any personal question. We must always remember that he is shooting his own arrows from behind our shield, and that it is we who suffer when his shots provoke public indignation."[1] And so with other leader-writers; some were "safe" on one subject, others "safe" on another; and some few there were who were indicated by Delane as safe and good on anything.

This comprehensive commendation meant, I suppose, that they could be counted on to carry out the letter and spirit of their instructions; to have taken the trouble to familiarise themselves with the policy of the paper on each subject, and to have the loyalty to conform to it. If Delane did not feel sure about this and was not himself on the spot, he would say to his assistant: "Pray take care that X.'s article answers my stipulations." Delane made a point, if circumstances admitted, of giving stipulations or instructions in writing: there could be no dispute, or excuse for misunderstanding, about the written word of command. "He possessed in a rare degree," said the Warden of Merton, "the art of inspiring articles by short and pithy notes, suggesting but not dictating the line to be taken. If these notes could be published, they would show how complete, yet how easy, was his grasp, not only of home and foreign affairs, but of all the subjects, grave or gay, which

[1] *Dasent*, i., 301.

interest the readers of newspapers."[1] A few of the notes have been published since Mr. Brodrick wrote; and in some of them the information given is so full and the method of treatment so carefully suggested that Delane might almost in the same time have written the articles himself.[2] There were generally two or three leader-writers in attendance at the office each evening; so strict was their anonymity that they knew little of each other. Delane "kept his beasts," it used to be said, "in separate cages," and if one of them met another in passages or on the stairs it was not etiquette for them to speak.[3] If the treatment of an allotted subject was obvious, Delane would leave the writer to himself with no more than a verbal message. But if it were a matter of difficulty or doubt Delane would soon come into the writer's room, and in a few minutes' conversation indicate the line which it was desirable to take. "A few interesting and humorous observations would suffice to illustrate the true state of the question and to indicate the purpose to be kept in view, and then the more original the writer's treatment of the subject the better Delane was pleased. His influence in such conversations was due," says Dean Wace, "not so much to his authority as editor, as to the impression he produced of mastery of the whole situation. To talk to him was like talking to the great political or social world itself, and one's mind seemed to move in a larger sphere after a short discussion with him.

[1] *Brodrick*, p. 132.

[2] An example may be read in *Laughton*, i., 158—159. The instructions to Reeve on that occasion might have been printed in an article as they stood.

[3] So Mr. J. R. Thursfield tells us, in the "Dictionary of National Biography" (under "John Walter II.").

Those midnight conversations," adds the Dean, "are among the most interesting and instructive reminiscences of my work in Printing House Square."[1] Sometimes there was need of an article on the spur of the moment by a writer who was not in attendance at the office. Lowe's biographer records occasions when Delane despatched a special messenger to Lowndes Square at midnight; whereupon Mrs. Lowe would spring out of bed and write to her husband's dictation while the messenger waited.[2]

Delane's last line of defence against being misrepresented or rushed by his leader-writers was revision, and this power he used indefatigably and ruthlessly. His corrections touched points of style as well as of substance. "I have heard," says Kinglake, "that when thus dealing with the proofs Mr. Delane disclosed a severe taste, striking out a great deal of ornament, and many of what, to the writers, had seemed the best parts. By this discipline, if so one may call it, he fostered a disposition to write in sterling, unadorned English."[3] "However trivial or however lofty the subject, Delane expected it to be treated in good simple English, capable of being translated into Latin prose, without slang and without technicality." Mr. Brodrick avers that "to this rule writers instinctively conformed"[4]; but this was not Delane's own opinion. There was a certain leader-writer who was most conscientious in taking trouble to cram his articles with information, but whose English was so bad, Delane complained, that the articles required translation. Another leader-writer

[1] *Wace*, p. 9.
[2] Patchett Martin's "Life of Lord Sherbrooke," ii., 26.
[3] "Crimea," vii., 453.
[4] *Brodrick*, p. 139.

has recalled how in the heat and haste of editing in the small hours of the morning Delane would insist upon the correction of inaccurate or slovenly expressions. He applied the same vigilance to the work of reporters and to the simplest paragraphs. "I remember," says Dean Wace, "his being particularly indignant with the use of the slipshod phrase that a marriage, or a funeral, or a race, had 'taken place.' It was mere slovenliness of expression, he said, instead of saying that a marriage had been solemnised or a race run. He exerted a valuable influence in this way toward maintaining in the public mind a standard of correct English writing."[1] If an article were not pressing, he would take the proof home with him and revise it at leisure; and he liked to have some "stock leaders" on the list, ready to fill a sudden gap, as when he was "obliged to leave out" an article of the day by one of the writers aforesaid because it was so "violently adverse to public sentiment." Sometimes it was possible to mend matters by wholesale alterations. "Bob Lowe wrote such an article upon John Bright! It made my hair stand on end, and I have had to alter it almost beyond recognition."[2] A more desperate expedient, a more cruel experience, is recorded by Sir William Russell:—

"Once I read a leader which was word for word as I had sent it into Delane's room till midway, when another hand was set to work, and I saw: 'So far we have presented to our readers all that can fairly be urged in favour of something or other, and having done so, we will now proceed to test the value of the arguments.' And then came an elaborate refutation of my text, caused, I believe, by a visit to the editor

[1] *Wace*, p. 13.
[2] *Dasent*, ii., 159.

at the office of an eminent statesman during a debate in the House." [1]

I incline to doubt the accuracy of this explanation; it suggests rather a friendly attempt of someone in the office to soothe the wounded feelings of a general favourite. It would be contrary to one's knowledge of human nature to believe what has somewhere been stated, that none of Delane's writers "ever failed to agree cordially in his revision, alterations and suppressions." [2]

Next to the leading articles the contributions to which Delane gave the closest personal attention were the obituary notices of famous people. These have always been a strong feature in *The Times*, and those which appeared during Delane's editorship owed much to his personal knowledge of the statesmen and other celebrities of his day. But indeed there was no part of the paper on which he did not keep a vigilant eye. "I have not stirred from this place since I last saw you," he wrote to a member of his staff one September, "and I believe not a column has been published in *The Times* which had not some of my handwriting on the margin." [3] An entry in his diary for 1874 gives a curious instance of the editor's minute attention. He had been present at a dinner in the City given in honour of a certain General. "In dealing with his speech, I prevented popular indignation, as far as I could, by taking the I's out of it." [4]

[1] *Atkins*, i., 376.
[2] Memoir of Delane in *The Times*, November 25, 1879.
[3] *Brodrick*, p. 133.
[4] Delane's way out in this case recalls a story of an Australian journalist. An editor was making preparations to report *verbatim* "a great speech" by a politician whose fondness for the first personal pronoun was only equalled by aversion from the aspirate. The editor is said to have telegraphed to a *confrère* in an adjoining State, "Can you spare me a case of I's in return for one of h's?"

"He maintained an absolute mastery" [says one of Delane's colleagues] "of the whole of the paper in all its details. He 'read,' in the Press sense of the word, everything which was to appear in the paper next morning, and edited it so as to ensure that the whole was in harmony and was fitted to produce one clear impression on the public mind. The telegrams, the correspondent's letter, the observations in Parliament, were all kept in view in the leading article, and were themselves kept in due relation to one another. He insisted on being himself responsible for all the news supplied to the public; he was solely responsible for the interpretation of those news and for the comments upon them. He selected the letters addressed to *The Times* which were to be published; he chose the books which were to be reviewed, and exercised an independent judgment on the reviews which were supplied; he was scrupulous as to the way in which even small matters of social interest were announced and handled. In short, the paper every morning was not a mere collection of pieces of news from all parts of the world, of various opinions, and of more or less valuable essays. It was Mr. Delane's report to the public of the news of the day, interpreted by Mr. Delane's opinions, and directed throughout by Mr. Delane's principles and purposes. This method of editing was infinitely laborious. Even when *The Times* was much less than its present size, the task of 'reading,' correcting and controlling from forty to fifty columns of new matter every night was immense. But Mr. Delane never shrank from it, and it certainly gave the paper as a whole a unity, a cohesion, an interest and an effectiveness which can be obtained by no other method."[1]

If then Delane was *The Times*, so also was *The Times* Delane; and here the man and the editor meet. Delane was a great editor because, among other reasons, he was a man of wide experience and many interests. He had his limitations, as I point out elsewhere, but he was a full man, and there is little human that was alien to him. He had a robust and genial nature which loved real action of all kinds. He had brought from Oxford a general literary culture.

[1] *Wace*, p. 5.

In London, as already mentioned, he attended the hospitals; he also studied law, and in 1847 had been called to the Bar. During visits to Paris, he sat at the feet of the great French physiologist François Magendie. Thus, "although he was neither a scholar nor a lawyer nor a doctor, he was a good deal of each, and he was able to follow the varying developments of those great spheres of thought and life." [1] As a young man he had been fond of the theatre, and the National Portrait Gallery, in the establishment of which he took a strong interest, contains some theatrical portraits presented by him. He was a keen student of military affairs. His was one of those active natures which find interest everywhere and love to throw themselves into the full current of life. He knew everybody, went everywhere, and from every one he met, as from every place he visited, he found something to learn. In all his experience, said a much-travelled companion of Delane, he had never met any one with so universal an interest in things great and small.[2] He was tolerant of everything but trivialities, and thought of all subjects of any consequence as involving deep human interests. "*The Times* held up a mirror to the public because Delane, who moulded it from day to day, was himself the mirror—a mirror, indeed, which so far modified the reality as it brought all which it reflected to a focus and an object, but in which all the elements of the life of the day found their place." [3]

Delane, it will have been seen, was a great worker. Those who are interested in the habits of great

[1] *Wace*, p. 6.
[2] General Eber; as reported by *Sband*, p. 195.
[3] *Wace*, p. 8.

workers may like to know that he did not smoke and that he drank wine sparingly. "He dressed carefully," says a friend, "though he never sacrificed to the graces." [1] "Of robust appearance and a somewhat florid complexion, he resembled, in middle life, a typical country squire." Though he was fond of general society and had a very wide circle of friends, he was devoted to his family and his home. He had married early in life (1842) the widow of Francis Bacon, assistant-editor of *The Times*, but after a few years of married life she was separated from her husband and placed under medical care. He had no children, and his domestic affections were centred in his parents, his brothers and his sisters. His father died in 1857; his mother in 1869. Whatever the pressure of work might be, he never failed to write to her on every day that they spent apart. She was, he said, "the most sagacious adviser, as well as the fondest of mothers." "Plenty of work, and a dogged pleasure in doing it," was an entry in his diary a few days after her death.

[1] *Sband*, p. 197.

CHAPTER VIII

THE GLADSTONIAN ERA (1866-1873).

"I wish you and Gladstone had more personal communication. It would be of immense advantage to him, and for the direction of such an important organ of public opinion as *The Times* it cannot be otherwise than an advantage to know the mind of one who in every position is sure to exercise so great an influence on public affairs."—LORD GRANVILLE (letter to Delane, 1867).

"I AM aware," wrote Lord Russell to a colleague, "that Mr. Delane was very angry that I did not ask to kiss his hand instead of the Queen's when I was appointed to succeed Palmerston; but I would rather not be in office than hold it on such humiliating conditions." [1] The Prime Minister went on to give the childish account of Delane's alliance with Palmerston which has been cited in an earlier chapter [2]; and if he really believed that the political course of the great editor was governed by the question whether the wives of the leader-writers were or were not invited to evening parties, it is not surprising that he chose to keep such a ridiculous person at arm's length. Lord Russell's aloofness from Delane did not cut the editor off entirely from Ministerial confidences, for in the Government as reconstituted upon the death of Lord Palmerston he had some old friends, and especially Lord Clarendon. The new Prime Minister's

[1] *Maxwell*, ii., 313.
[2] Above, p. 97.

mot d'ordre was, however, that information was not to be given to Delane. The editor's independence could not, as I have already shown, be sapped by the gift of information, however exclusive; and Delane's attitude towards the Russell Administration would not have been essentially altered even if the Prime Minister had kissed his hand. But confidential intercourse may do something to soften asperities, to turn doubtful points in a Minister's favour, and in times of crisis to influence an editor's judgment by putting him in possession of a certain point of view before he has yet committed himself and his paper. Delane, if not very angry, was yet somewhat sore at the cessation of those almost daily communications with the Prime Minister which had been his privilege during the years of Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston. In May, 1866, the Foreign Office was again perturbed by attacks in *The Times* upon the Emperor of the French, and Lord Granville, at Lord Clarendon's instance, mentioned the matter to Delane. He promised to drop a hint to his Paris correspondent, and took the opportunity of telling Lord Granville "how deeply grieved and mortified I have been at the cessation of that friendly intercourse on political affairs by which in happier times I so largely profited. It was not perhaps to be expected that the long immunity from party feeling which we enjoyed under Lord Palmerston should continue under Lord Russell, but I at least have done nothing to provoke the bitterness which now prevails, and from which no one suffers more than myself. As to Lord Russell, it is no new thing that I should not be among his followers, but I have at any rate left him unassailed, and if I have felt obliged to oppose some of his measures, I

have always endeavoured to be respectful to himself. In fact I feel that I have nothing to excuse as regards Lord Russell, but much to lament as regards yourself." [1] There is an obvious note of grievance in this letter, as well as a cry from the heart of a Palmerstonian Whig in sorrow that the old things have passed away. Lord Russell's aloofness rankled somewhat, and was perhaps a political mistake. Lord Acton thought that at a later time Lord Russell's successor had made a like mistake. "Mr. Gladstone," he wrote, "dislikes thinking of those things, and allowed Delane to slip from him. Don't leave the whole thing to be done at No. 18" [2]—*i.e.*, by Lord Granville.

Lord Russell's outburst against Delane (May, 1866) and Delane's appeal to Lord Granville (June 1) belong to the time when the Russell Administration was *in extremis*. Delane had foreseen the course of events with great precision. "My own impression is," he wrote on hearing of Palmerston's death, "that Lord Russell must be Premier, Gladstone must lead the Commons and Clarendon be Foreign Secretary; that this is a necessary consequence of the present state of affairs; that Granville will take the Embassy at Paris; and that this Ministry will be forced into a Reform Bill, and very probably be broken up next Session." [3] Except that Lord Granville did not take the Paris Embassy, everything happened as Delane predicted. The dominating members of the Cabinet were Lord Russell and Mr.

[1] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 505—506.
[2] "Acton's Letters to M. G.," p. 13.
[3] Letter to G. W. Dasent (*Dasent*, ii., 148).

Gladstone, and both were ardent Reformers. But the task which confronted them was one of great difficulty. It was to pass a Reform Bill through a Parliament which did not want it. The general election which had been held shortly before the death of Palmerston had indeed returned a large Government majority, but it was a vote of confidence in Lord Palmerston, not a vote in favour of a Reform Bill. The Cabinet itself, with few exceptions, was lukewarm; the Opposition wanted only to defeat the Government; the Government benches were divided in opinion. Prudence suggested that the Government should move warily, consolidating its position, and leaving time for further indication of the mind of the country. But Lord Russell was 74, and the Government rushed to its doom. Delane had uttered notes of warning, which old men in a hurry seldom welcome, and this perhaps explains the outburst by Lord Russell, cited above. The Cabinet, said *The Times*, needed strengthening by the inclusion of younger men. Arrangements which were tolerable in the time of Lord Palmerston would not do now that his popular personality was gone. "Our present rulers are bad nurserymen; they have planted out no young trees, and when the old ones fall there will be none to replace them. The official experience which has been gained by nearly thirty years of office is concentrated in an incredibly small number of hands." [1] When the Reform Bill was produced, Delane was equally critical.[2] It was easy to be critical, for the Bill, by its very moderation and incompleteness, offered a broad front to attack. It was based on no great

[1] Leading article, October 31, 1865.
[2] See, for instance, the leading article of March 21, 1866.

principle, and thus neither compelled enthusiastic unity among Reformers nor discouraged opposition on the other side. Some of the most famous debates in our parliamentary history were waged upon the question whether rating or rental should be the test of a £7 qualification for borough voters. The heroes of the fight were Gladstone on the one side and Lowe on the other, to whose Cave of Adullam every one was invited who was distressed and every one who was discontented. The second reading was carried by a majority of 5—a victory almost as bad as a defeat. A little later, upon an amendment to substitute rateable value for gross estimated rental, the actual defeat came; Ministers were in a minority of 11. What was then to be done? Delane, who had been to the House to hear the debate, had a clear and strong opinion. The Government, he said in the paper next morning, ought to accept the amendment and go straight ahead. Before leaving *The Times* office Delane wrote privately urging the same advice upon Lord Clarendon. It would be absurd to break up the Government on account of a paltry defeat in committee on a paltry question. The Liberal party had been in power for seven years, and had just come back from a general election. To go out on a question of rating *versus* rental would be a most undignified end. The Bill should be withdrawn, with a pledge that another should be introduced in the following session, and a vote of confidence be sought.[1] Lord Clarendon, as appears from his letters to Lord Russell,[2] took Delane's view, and some other members of the Cabinet were of the same opinion. The critical

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 169.
[2] In *Maxwell*, ii., 315, 316.

state of foreign affairs—for Europe was on the verge of the Austro-Prussian War—was a further argument against a hasty change of Government. Delane thought that on the particular issue the House of Commons had taken the right, and Ministers the wrong, view; the difference between rateable value and gross estimated rental might be no greater than between Tweedledum and Tweedledee; but so far as the merits of the case went, the decision of the House was "a victory of reason over authority," and the Cabinet ought to submit to the House.[1] But Ministers had committed themselves deeply to the side of Tweedledee, and as the House had chosen to spoil their nice new rattle, they refused to play any longer. "No honest jury could possibly return any other verdict," said *The Times* when the Government announced its resignation, "than that it has committed suicide to prove estimated rental a better test than rateable value. Such is the bright martyrdom Mr. Gladstone has attained to. But what a time to do it in!"[2] There was some delay, however, for the Queen was absent at Balmoral. On June 26 Lord Russell announced that her Majesty had invited Ministers to reconsider their decision, suggesting that a defeat upon a matter of detail need not demand such an extreme resolution at so critical a period. Ministers, however, thought that their *amour propre* should be the governing consideration, and persisted in resignation.[3] "Every loyal subject," wrote *The Times* (June 27), "will rejoice to find her Majesty taking decidedly a more sensible view of the matter

[1] Leading article, June 19, 1866.
[2] June 20.
[3] For Russell's explanations, see Spencer Walpole's Life of him, ii., 414—415.

than her late advisers. It certainly requires not only explanation, but apology, that with half Europe in arms, and diplomacy rapidly quickening its pace, as well as widening its range, the Government of this great Empire should throw down the reins upon such a detail as the choice between rateable value and estimated rental." In later years Mr. Gladstone, it is interesting to know, thought that Delane's view was right.[1] In bidding farewell to the Russell Administration, Delane made amend for a former slight [2] and took occasion to pay a deserved compliment to an old friend, Lord Clarendon. "It is certainly with good reason," said *The Times* with reference to foreign affairs (June 28), "that her Majesty was reluctant to transfer to new hands at a perilous crisis the management of relations so successfully conducted. Lord Clarendon unites in a singular degree the conditions desirable in a Foreign Secretary of the present day. His experience is great and varied, his reputation is so widely established that his name is a sufficient warrant to all foreign Governments, and though he doubtless shares in that general liberality of sentiment which prevails in this country he never committed himself to officious and offensive interference." The article drew from Lord Clarendon a warm letter of thanks.[3]

On Lord Russell's resignation Lord Derby at once formed an Administration, with Disraeli as leader of the House of Commons and Lord Stanley as Foreign Secretary. *The Times* announced this latter

[1] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 207: "When he looked back upon this particular question, he blamed himself and his colleagues for too promptly acquiescing in advice to throw down the reins."

[2] See above, p. 160.

[3] See *Dasent*, ii., 173.

appointment on June 27, and Lord Russell sent a growl to Lord Clarendon. "I see," he wrote, "that Lord Stanley is announced as your successor, and that Lord Derby has done that which I would not do, namely, submitted his appointments to Mr. Delane before submitting them to the Queen. This is a new constitution itself, and one much to be deprecated."[1] Lord Clarendon tried to pacify the old statesman by suggesting that *The Times* had only fixed a current rumour. It may have been so; but Disraeli was a friend, Lord Stanley when last in office had communicated very freely with Delane, and Lord Derby himself, for all his scorn of the Press,[2] sometimes, as Lord Russell would have said, kissed the great editor's hand. The new Government needed all the support it would get, for it presently engaged in one of the most difficult enterprises of which our political annals give record. In 1866 the Conservatives, with the aid of Lowe and his anti-Reform Adullamites, had defeated a very moderate Reform Bill brought in by the Liberals. In 1867 the Conservatives carried through the same Parliament a far more Liberal Reform Bill. It was at once a great victory and a great surrender. Peel did something like it in 1846, but in the doing of it he broke his party; Disraeli was able to boast that he had educated his party. The Bill was moulded into its final shape by Gladstone and Bright; a recent biography has shown, indeed, that

[1] *Maxwell*, ii., 320.

[2] See above, pp. 68, 70, and below, p. 277. Lord Malmesbury, in his "Memoirs of an Ex-Minister," made some remarks in 1857 on this subject: "Lord Derby has never been able to realize the sudden growth and power of the political Press for which he has no partiality, which feeling is reciprocated by its members. In these days this is a fatal error in men who wish to obtain public power and distinction. His son with greater wisdom for the day has taken the opposite line, and with benefit to his popularity and advancement."

it may in a curious sense be called Bright's Bill.[1] But Gladstone and Bright could not have carried it. The trick was Disraeli's. "A policy of legerdemain" was the description of it given by the dissentient Lord Cranborne.[2] "Disraeli's diabolical cleverness" was what impressed Mr. Gladstone.[3]

Delane wished well to the great adventure, and saw in it no such "revolting cynicism" as shocked Mr. Gladstone; but then he was not tied to any party, he edited *The Times*. Reform was the question of the moment; the popular agitation, headed by John Bright, had convinced even the lukewarm that a Bill, and a large Bill, was necessary. Delane had wished that the Liberals should persevere, but his advice was not taken. They had thrown up the attempt, and thereby courted the fate of being "dished." They had left their "clothes" by the wayside; it was fair game that they should be "stolen." These things were put in more pompous language by *The Times* in its Summary of the year (1866):—

"The erection of the necessary edifice is more important than the choice of a presiding hero or patron saint, and the conventional right of Lord Russell and Mr. Gladstone to give their names to a Reform Bill has been waived for the present by the errors of judgment and deficiency in tact which caused or excused the defeat of the Bill of 1866. The country cares little whether the Conservatives are entitled to the honour of performing a task which has become indispensable to the national welfare. It is not forgotten that the Duke of Wellington passed Catholic Emancipation, and that Sir Robert Peel repealed the Corn Laws. If Lord Derby, by reconciling his party to a liberal extension of the suffrage, disarms the demagogues who endanger public safety, he will be at liberty

[1] See Mr. G. M. Trevelyan's "Life of Bright," chap. xvii.
[2] Afterwards Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister.
[3] Reid's "Houghton," ii., 174.

to settle the question of the political consistency of himself and his colleagues with his party, with his conscience, and with future history."

Some of his colleagues thought it a political betrayal that had no parallel in our parliamentary annals, and resigned their offices.[1] Some of the party consented with a gibe, and a *mot* of James Lowther's went the round of the town, "that he did not see how he could meet his constituents after having refused a moderate measure from a good Christian and taken an extreme measure from a bad Jew." Others consented gladly. "Delane says," wrote the same vivacious chronicler,[2] "that the extreme party for Reform are now the grandees, and that the dukes are quite ready to follow Beales into Hyde Park."

The game began with a series of Reform resolutions which were presented to the House of Commons on February 11, 1867. The Prime Minister had previously shown them in confidence to Delane, who pronounced them to be "illusory, impracticable, intangible and misty."[3] On February 25 Disraeli expounded the Bill which was to be based on the resolutions. The measure is based, said Delane, on no intelligible principle.[4] Then came a meeting of the Liberal party at Mr. Gladstone's house, at which it was decided—as *The Times* had been recommending—to vote for the Bill and amend it in committee. *The Times* next day published a report of the proceedings (February 27). The meeting was supposed to be private, and people sometimes wonder how reports of such meetings get into the newspapers. The account

[1] Lord Cranborne, Lord Carnarvon and General Peel.
[2] *Houghton*, ii., 175.
[3] *Dasent*, ii., 188.
[4] *The Times*, February 26.

in *The Times* was a compost of accounts sent to Delane by several friends—Henry Brand and Charles Villiers among them.[1] In committee all the fancy franchises were struck out. In the House of Lords, on the motion of Lord Cairns, an amendment was inserted providing for a minority vote in the three-member constituencies. This device, which in an imperfect form aimed at securing proportional representation in the large boroughs, had been strenuously advocated in *The Times*. The articles on the subject were written by Mr. Leonard Courtney (now Lord Courtney of Penwith). On the day when the amendment was accepted by the Commons (August 8) Delane wrote in his diary: "The great division affecting the cumulative vote and our great success." The success was celebrated by a triumphant article in *The Times* (August 9).

So Disraeli triumphed. But the "leap in the dark" had hardly been accomplished before public attention was diverted to another train of events which was destined to overthrow Disraeli and bring his rival into power. Shortly after the Reform session of 1867 had ended, England was startled by a daring crime at Manchester. Some prisoners under examina-

[1] Similarly, people used to wonder how *The Times* was able to publish the contents of the Queen's Speech before it was read in Parliament. Greville has a passage on the point (February 2, 1854): "There is always great anxiety on the part of the Press to get the Queen's Speech, so as to give a sketch of it the morning of the day when it is made. . . . The other day Aberdeen refused to give it even to *The Times*. . . . Nevertheless the Speech appeared. . . . Delane has friends in all parties, and he told me that he had no less than three offers of it." As the Speech is always shown at the Ministerial and Opposition dinners on the evening before the opening of Parliament, many people know its contents in advance. Later in the reign of Queen Victoria the practice of previous communication to leading members of the Press was regularised, but on condition that the fact was decorously wrapped up. The papers "would not be surprised" if this and that were said in the Speech, or found "reason for expecting" that such and such would be mentioned. With the accession of King Edward the practice was abandoned and the contents of the Speech were treated as strictly confidential until delivery.

tion were being driven from a police court to the borough gaol. The prison van was stopped by a body of armed men. The police officer in charge was shot dead and the prisoners escaped. The prisoners and their rescuers were Fenians. The Irish-American conspiracy, of which this rescue was an incident, had occupied some share of the attention of Parliament since the day in February, 1866, when the two Houses were summoned by Lord Russell in great haste to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. *The Times* in the latter part of the same year had been full of special articles dealing with the Fenian movement; but the British public takes one thing at a time, and Reform filled the stage. The Manchester rescue recalled attention to the Irish question. Three months later an event occurred to reinforce the lesson with more resounding emphasis. In the afternoon of December 13 all London was startled by what was at first supposed to be the blowing up of a powder-magazine or the distant throb of an earthquake. The actual cause was an attempt to rescue some Fenian prisoners in the Clerkenwell House of Detention by the explosion of a barrel of gunpowder. The object of the attempt failed; many innocent persons were killed; but the explosion laid a train which had decisive consequences in Ireland and at Westminster. "The influence of Fenianism," said Mr. Gladstone, "was this—that when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, when all the consequent proceedings occurred, when the tranquillity of the great city of Manchester was disturbed, when the metropolis itself was shocked and horrified by an inhuman outrage, when a sense of insecurity went abroad far and wide, when the inhabitants of the different towns of the country were swear-

ing themselves in as special constables for the maintenance of life and property—then it was that these phenomena came home to the popular mind, and produced that attitude of attention and preparedness on the part of the whole population of this country which qualified them to embrace, in a manner foreign to their habits in other times, the vast importance of the Irish controversy."[1] Mr. Gladstone saw that the time had come for a serious attempt to remove Irish grievances as an alternative to the repeal of the Union. He proceeded to lay his axe to the roots of the upas tree in Ireland. In doing so he ousted Disraeli.

In these events Delane took much the same view as Mr. Gladstone's. Those who know the Irish record of *The Times* only in later stages of the Home Rule controversy may suppose that the paper has always been inimical to the more popular cause in Ireland. Such a supposition does injustice, as we have already seen, to *The Times* of Delane.[2] He was himself of Irish descent; he knew the country well; he had there many friends and constant correspondents. He was, on the one hand, as strong as Lord Salisbury for resolute government; the party which Ireland wants, he said, is "the party of order and peace." But, on the other hand, he saw at this time as clearly as John Bright that force is no remedy. Order and peace could only be secured and maintained if repression of lawlessness were accompanied by remedial laws. "There cannot be a more fatal mistake," said *The Times* in a phrase worthy of Burke, "than to apply violent remedies to chronic diseases." And again: "Only by wise and humane government can we hope

[1] *Hansard*, May 31, 1869.
[2] Above, p. 37.

to eradicate the memory of ancient wrongs and to reconcile the Irish people to the inevitable necessity of union with this island. It may take generations to do it, but it will be done at last, and in the meantime we cannot too scrupulously avoid a repetition of the cruel blunders committed in 1798. It is by measures of prevention, and not by measures of violence, that Fenianism must be over-awed." In May, 1867, one of the Fenian leaders, Colonel Burke, who had served with distinction in the army of the Southern Confederation, was sentenced to death for treason. There was a public meeting at the St. James's Hall in London, at which John Stuart Mill pleaded for mercy. *The Times* took the same view. "The majesty of the law," it said, "has been vindicated by the capture, conviction, and condemnation of the Fenian leaders; it would be weakness, and not vigour, to ennoble their desperate cause by shedding the blood of a single rebel at our mercy." Burke's sentence was commuted "on the ground that public feeling was opposed to his execution." In the case of the "Manchester martyrs" it was different; rebellion was one thing, the murder of a police officer was another. Here, again, eloquent voices were raised on the side of leniency—John Bright's for one, and Swinburne's, in "An Appeal, November 20, 1867," for another. Delane, though the prisoners "had the address to make it very difficult and even odious to hang them," [1] held that motive could not be allowed to save men from the legal penalty of a murder which struck at the roots of the social order.[2] The "noble-hearted three" went "with souls undaunted to their

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 217.
[2] *The Times*, November 4, 1867.

doom," and the odium which Delane foresaw was enshrined in T. D. Sullivan's poem called "God save Ireland." A speech by Lord Stanley at Bristol, which caused much remark at the time[1] for its sympathetic references to "the miserable state of things in Ireland," encouraged Delane to hope that the Conservatives would introduce "a bold Bill" for meeting the claims of the tenants, especially in the matter of compensation for improvements,[2] but the hope was disappointed. When Parliament met, the Conservative plan for the miserable state of things was another suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

Disraeli had now become Prime Minister, as Lord Derby had resigned in consequence of illness on February 24. Of the other Ministerial changes, that which attracted most attention was the appointment of Ward Hunt as Chancellor of the Exchequer. Disraeli, it seems, had been confirmed in his choice by Delane's approval. They had met at dinner shortly before, and in view of changes known to be imminent Disraeli had mentioned Hunt's name to Delane. "What you said decided me," wrote Disraeli to him afterwards, "which should teach both of us the advantage of dining out."[3] Disraeli's failure to cope with the miserable state of things in Ireland was Gladstone's opportunity. On March 16, on a motion about the state of Ireland, he launched his famous declaration that the time had come when the Church of Ireland as a Church in alliance with the State must cease to exist. On April 30, the first disestablishment

[1] January 22, 1868. It is quoted in Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 242.
[2] Leading article, January 23, February 19, 25, 1868.
[3] *Dasent*, ii., 222. Ward Hunt's appointment was predicted, in advance of the official announcement, in *The Times* of February 27.

resolution was carried by a majority of 65. Next a Bill suspending the creation of new interests in the Irish Church was passed by the Commons but thrown out by the Lords. Disraeli had tendered his resignation to the Queen; but the decision was that Parliament should be dissolved in the autumn. The election held in November returned a great Liberal majority. Disraeli resigned on December 2 and Gladstone became Prime Minister with a clear mandate to disestablish the Irish Church.

During the process of Cabinet-making, as on former occasions of the kind, Delane was the recipient of hints from men who would like to be in, and complaints from men who were left out. The obvious Foreign Secretary was Lord Clarendon, but the Queen, who had taken offence at some remarks by that "free, entertaining and jovial" [1] talker, raised objection. Delane had perhaps heard of this, for at first he suggested that Lord Granville would be Foreign Secretary and Lord Clarendon Lord President of the Council (December 4). Mr. Gladstone, however, overruled the Queen, and on the following day *The Times* anticipated Lord Clarendon's appointment to the Foreign Office. His brother, Charles Villiers, whom Delane had mentioned a few days before among those suitable for the Cabinet, was left out, to his great chagrin, as may be seen by his letters to Delane.[2] Villiers regarded Mr. Gladstone's excuse that he could not have two members of the same family in the Cabinet as both insincere and unconvincing; the rule has certainly not bound some other Prime Ministers. The first, and best, of Mr. Gladstone's

[1] Mr. Gladstone's words: *Morley*, ii., 254.
[2] Printed in *Dasent*, ii., 230, 231.

Administrations was soon formed, and *The Times* pronounced that "since the dissolution of the Aberdeen Government in 1856 no Cabinet has included ability so great and so various." Of the Household and some other appointments Delane wrote in lighter vein. "The Cabinet is complete. The secondary offices of State are, with few exceptions, filled. Another day or two, and we may hope even the Household will be newly re-constituted. The triumph of the British Constitution will then be perfect." The answer of the electorate on the question of the Irish Church "carries its effects into the inmost recesses of the Palace. The people of England have decided that the policy of ascendancy shall be abandoned; but it appears they have decided far more than this, for they have by their verdict dismissed chamberlains and stewards, a Master of the Buckhounds, the Controller of the Household, and even lords-in-waiting." Charles Villiers had told Delane that Lord Halifax was going to Ireland. Delane in the same article made fun of the suggested appointment. Disraeli's saying was recalled that a Lord Lieutenant of Ireland ought to be "a person of ability and splendour," and Lord Halifax was not splendid. *The Times* suggested Lord Dufferin.[1] For the office of Lord Chamberlain Lord Sydney was designated, and *The Times* looked forward to the activities of that nobleman as "supervisor of theatres and director-general of our amusements." "Your article of this morning," wrote Lord Torrington from Windsor (December 9), "was much appreciated in the equerries' room. I enjoyed it much. Sydney came down as Chamberlain, and did we not chaff him about your article!" The

[1] The actual appointment was of Lord Spencer.

point of the remark lay in Lord Sydney's gravity of deportment.[1] Such little "asides" in an article, of no significance to the general reader but well understood by the elect, contribute to the influence of a paper in the inner circle. Mr. Gladstone himself went nearer than Lord Russell would have approved to kissing hands with the great editor. In personal letters to Delane the Minister reported progress from Windsor; and at a dinner party at Lord Granville's (December 7) was "most attentive." So Delane noted in his diary.[2]

On the first task of the new Government Delane was heartily sympathetic, and his influence was of some assistance to Mr. Gladstone at a critical moment. *The Times* had been a strong advocate of the disestablishment of the Irish Church before the question was expressly referred to the electorate.[3] The verdict given at the polls was unmistakable, and the acceptance of the Bill by the Commons was a foregone conclusion. Its fate hung, however, for many days in the balance owing to amendments made by the Lords. There were moments when a rupture between the two Houses seemed almost certain; and, had this occurred, controversies of our own day might have become acute forty years earlier. It is a matter of history, familiar from many books of memoirs, how the Queen intervened through the Archbishop of Canterbury, and how by the tact and patience of Lord Granville on the one side and the good sense of Lord Cairns on the other a reasonable compromise was ultimately adopted.

[1] Lord Granville referred to him under the *sobriquet* of "Deportment," and elsewhere, in speaking of him, mentions "that chin and that air" (*Fitzmaurice*, i., 171, 179).

[2] *Dasent*, ii., 229.

[3] See, *e.g.*, the leading article of May 8, 1867.

Delane threw all his influence into this scale—privately, as is shown by an incidental reference in a memorandum by Lord Granville,[1] and publicly, as the files of his paper attest. He warned the House of Lords of the consequences of a rupture; he pleaded, day after day, for the acceptance of compromise.[2] The crisis, says Gladstone's biographer, was "of unsurpassed anxiety for the Prime Minister"; there were hours when he had to take to his sofa and was almost unmanned. To Delane also, who was in daily communication at this time with the Prime Minister, the crisis was not without anxiety. He had pleaded hard for settlement; he had pledged the prescience of his paper to the prediction that it would come. As the tide of negotiation, now this, now that way swung, he was alternately confident and depressed. He could not sleep. But on July 22 the crisis was safely over. "Went to the Lords again," he wrote in his diary,[3] "where the compromise which I had pronounced inevitable was declared to my great satisfaction." Such are the alternations of hope and fear through which the editor of an influential paper must pass in a time of crisis.

The principal measures of the following session (1870) received strong support from Delane. Mr. Gladstone's Irish Land Bill was acclaimed in *The Times* (February 17) as "without doubt the most considerable proposal of constructive legislation that has been presented to Parliament since 1832. We frankly confess that the Bill exceeds our anticipations. We may be permitted to say that we long ago indi-

[1] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 270.
[2] See July 2, 3, and 17 to 23.
[3] *Dasent*, ii., 244.

cated the lines upon which it is drawn; but in a design of such extent and complexity there must ever be present a fear, until the construction is completed, that the hand will falter in some part of the work. The present Bill dispels such fears. We adopt without reserve the words used by Mr. Bright, 'I think it a just and comprehensive measure.'" The Education Bill of the same year received an equally cordial welcome (February 18). "The Government have capped their first success with a second. When Mr. Forster sat down last night he had achieved a genuine triumph. The Education Bill has been framed in a spirit at once comprehensive and conservative. The Bill will undoubtedly secure the approbation of Parliament; but even were this less certain, the Government might comfort themselves with the thought that if they did not attain success they had done everything to deserve it." In the session of 1871 the support given to Government by *The Times* was not so strenuous, though Delane accepted the Ballot (February 21) as inevitable and warmly approved of the abolition of Purchase in the Army (May 11). Some other Ministerial performances of the same year found in Delane a frank critic; but we must first turn aside to graver events of the time abroad.

Lord Clarendon, the Foreign Secretary, had died on June 27, 1870, "under the weight of affairs; in the very act," as Lord Granville told the House of Lords, "of trying to arrange a matter necessary to civilisation in Europe." The allusion can hardly have been understood at the time, for the negotiations to which Lord Granville referred had been communicated to nobody else except the Queen and the Prime Minister. They consisted, as is now well known from books of

memoirs, of proposals for disarmament made to Prussia by Lord Clarendon at the suggestion of the French Government. They were followed by war, as in our own time similar proposals have been followed by a war yet more terrible; but at the moment the catastrophe was not foreseen in this country. On the day that Lord Granville received the seals of the Foreign Office he was told by Mr. Hammond, the experienced Under-Secretary of the Department, that never had there been "so great a lull in foreign affairs." A few days later Lord Granville was engaged in futile efforts to avert the Franco-Prussian war. The British Government were resolved, if it were honourably possible, to remain neutral, and *The Times* was of the same mind. But there was one clear call of duty, and already on July 16 Mr. Gladstone was instructing the Secretary for War "to study the means of sending 20,000 men to Antwerp with as much promptitude as at the Trent affair we sent 10,000 to Canada." Nine days later *The Times* was made the vehicle of conveying an announcement which brought the question of the neutrality of Belgium, which had already been in Mr. Gladstone's mind, into painful prominence. Delane was in his rooms at Serjeants' Inn on the evening of July 24 when an important visitor was announced. Never had the editor been the recipient of a more startling confidence. The visitor was Baron Krause, of the Prussian Embassy, and he had come at the express command of Count Bismarck to show to the editor of *The Times*, with permission to publish *in extenso*, a certain document in the handwriting of M. Benedetti, the French Minister at Berlin. The date of the document, it was explained, was 1866. Delane read,

copied, and published it at once. "We have been favoured," said *The Times* (July 25), "with the following Projet de Traité." By this document, of which the text was subjoined, it was proposed that in certain eventualities for which the treaty provided, in case the Emperor of the French should cause his troops to enter Belgium or to conquer it, the King of Prussia should grant "armed aid to France" and "support her with all his forces, military and naval, in the face of and against every other Power which should in this eventuality declare war." Which of the two diplomatists had been the principal and which the accessory, whether the nefarious project originated in the secretive mind of Napoleon III. or was suggested to him by Bismarck as tempter; this is one of the enigmas of modern history. *The Times*, as Bismarck intended, assumed that the project had been tendered by France to Prussia. However that may be, the existence of some previous conspiracy between the two was clear, and the sensation caused by its disclosure was very great. Some people supposed that Delane had been hoaxed by a forgery, but Ministers knew better. On the evening of the day on which the draft treaty was published the subject was discussed in Parliament. Mr. Disraeli took occasion to say that he looked upon the extinction of the kingdom of Belgium as "a calamity to Europe and an injury to this country." Mr. Gladstone agreed that the disclosure was "of a nature to excite attention and even astonishment. I can give no information," he added, "to the right honourable gentleman or to the House as to the mode in which it has come to be communicated to the world through *The Times* newspaper." He could not say, but he doubtless knew; for, a few

days earlier, the existence of such a draft treaty had been disclosed to him and to Lord Granville by the Prussian Ambassador. Count Bismarck hoped doubtless that Mr. Gladstone would publish the fact to the world and thereby prejudice France in the judgment of Europe. When it was seen that Mr. Gladstone preferred to keep silence, publication in *The Times* was used as a second string. The publication produced a memorable result. Whether Mr. Gladstone and Lord Granville would have taken any action, if Delane had not printed the treaty, I do not know; but so great was the stir made by the publication, so general was the feeling that something should be done to obtain security against "a calamity to Europe and an injury to this country," so insistent was *The Times* itself in daily leading articles, that the Government took prompt and effective action. "The publication of the treaty has thrown upon us," wrote Mr. Gladstone to John Bright, "the necessity either of doing something fresh to secure Belgium, or else of saying that under no circumstances would we take any step to secure her from absorption. This publication has wholly altered the feeling of the House of Commons, and no Government could at this moment venture to give utterance to such an intention about Belgium. But neither do we think it would be right, even if it were safe, to announce that we would in any case stand by with folded arms, and see actions done which would amount to a total extinction of public right in Europe."[1] Having come to this decision, Mr. Gladstone's Government acted with skill and success. In the preliminary exchange of views which followed the publication in *The Times* each of the two

[1] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 341.

parties to the project sought to throw the responsibility upon the other. Lord Granville, taking advantage of this fact, invited France and Prussia concurrently to join in a treaty with this country which, while maintaining all the guarantees of the existing treaty of 1839, gave a new and special guarantee to the territorial integrity of Belgium in view of the Franco-Prussian war. It was provided that if the armies of either France or Prussia violated Belgian territory, Great Britain would co-operate with the other for its defence. This special treaty was to hold good during the war and for twelve months after its conclusion. Count Bismarck, in accepting the British proposal, added that it was really superfluous in view of the treaty of 1839 already in force. The French Government accepted the proposal also. To this stroke of policy Mr. Gladstone, we are told, "then and always after attached high importance."[1] Lord Morley was thinking no doubt of the fourth Midlothian speech, delivered ten years later, in which Mr. Gladstone retold the whole story and gloried in the fact that he and his colleagues had "enlisted themselves on the part of the British nation as advocates and as champions of the integrity and independence of Belgium. And if we had gone to war," he added, "we should have gone to war for freedom, we should have gone to war for public right, we should have gone to war to save human happiness from being invaded by tyrannous and lawless power. That is what I call a good cause, gentlemen. And though I detest war, and there are no epithets too strong, if you could supply me with them, that I will not endeavour to heap upon its head—in such a war as that, while

[1] *Morley*, ii., 341.

the breath in my body is continued to me, I am ready to engage, I am ready to support it, I am ready to give all the help and aid I can to those who carry this country into it." The importance of Mr. Gladstone's action in 1870 was not exhausted, nor did his help to the cause cease when the breath was no longer in his body. On the fateful 3rd of August, 1914, when a later Ministry was preparing the House of Commons for Great Britain's declaration of war against Germany, it was partly by Mr. Gladstone's speeches in the House on a like emergency in August, 1870, that Sir Edward Grey explained and justified his policy; and when a little later the German Government expressed its angry astonishment that Great Britain should make war for "just a scrap of paper," Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg was reminded how differently Count Bismarck had met the situation in 1870. So far-flung was the significance of events which followed from Baron Krause's call upon Delane in that year.

In the Franco-German war itself Delane and his special correspondents made no such great journalistic hits as those scored in the Crimea. Perhaps he was no more prepared for the war than was the Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office.[1] At the first Delane thought that the French would win. "Nothing shall ever persuade me," he wrote to Russell, "except the event—that the Prussians will withstand the French, and I would lay my last shilling upon Casquette against Pumpernickel."[2] The event caused him, however, to change his views, even before it was fully

[1] There is a passage, however, in a letter, written by Delane from Mainz in 1869, which was prophetic: "The Prussians have 12,000 men in garrison here and 8,000 in Coblentz; they are building new works miles outside the old ones, as if they meant to meet the French halfway to Metz" (*Dasent*, ii., 248).

[2] *Atkins*, ii., 165.

developed; and *The Times* gained some credit for sagacity by backing the Germans at a time when many other people in this country were still putting their money on Casquette. Thinking as he did at the outset, Delane was anxious to send his best special correspondent—Russell of the Crimea—to accompany the French army, and he appealed to Lord Granville for help in obtaining facilities. Lord Granville declined, as the Emperor was understood not to desire the assistance of any correspondents at the front. Delane was angry. Then he arranged with two British officers to join the Prussian army; they might pick up professional hints, while serving *The Times;* but the British Government would not allow them to go, for fear that their presence might give offence to the Emperor. Delane was furious. "Cardwell and Gladstone and Granville are a set of clerks," he wrote to Dasent, "excellent for parliamentary purposes or the business of administration, but quite incapable of the courage required in such emergencies as these." The courage, it will be observed, was to be shown on behalf of *The Times*, and Delane no doubt believed that this was a vital British interest: the sanest of men are often poor judges in their own cause. "This British Government," he went on, "which is not asked to contribute a shilling to these officers' expenses and which if it had any really British sympathies ought to share the British love of publicity, in its panic fear of giving offence refuses to allow its officers to proceed to the scene of war! Nobody attributed to them the pluck of Palmerston, but they might at least have had that of Pakington, who did not hesitate a moment to give the requisite permission.[1] I am

[1] This, if meant literally, was a slip of memory on Delane's part. The

sorry to have to speak thus of friends, but they are a mean-spirited, white-livered set, and will get no credit and no respect for the prostrate attitude they begin by assuming." [1] Thus Delane wrote in private; and the leading column of *The Times* followed suit. "We little expected that when the King of Prussia and General von Moltke were ready to receive our correspondents they would have been stayed by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Cardwell." The "servility" of Ministers was denounced; the British love of publicity was extolled; the right of special correspondents to gratify it was proclaimed (July 21). In every war there are neutrals whose journalists suppose that it is waged for the entertainment of spectators. As military officers were not allowed, Russell was sent to Berlin. He was treated there with distinguished consideration, which, however, proved embarrassing. He was attached to the Crown Prince's staff and was invited to dine at the palace; but the Crown Prince slipped off to the front, and many days elapsed before Russell succeeded in catching him up. When Russell at last came in touch with the fighting line, he was no longer easily first as in Crimean days. His account of Sedan may or may not have been the best, but at any rate it was not the first to reach London. Younger men with new methods were now in the field. Speed and clever devices for securing it [2] were now the first

reference is presumably to the permission given to Sir Henry Hozier to act as special correspondent for *The Times* with the Prussian army during the war of 1866; but Sir John Pakington was then First Lord of the Admiralty and did not succeed General Peel as Secretary for War till March, 1867. But perhaps Delane used "Pakington" generically and rhetorically, as a type of humdrum administrator.

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 266.

[2] Forbes many years afterwards explained some of his devices to Russell; see a letter in *Atkins*, ii., 220; anticipation of events before they occurred had something to do with it.

thing needful, and in this art Russell was beaten by Archibald Forbes. *The Times* hardly knew what to make of it. "The express manager of the *Daily News* is evidently more acute," Russell was told, "than we are or else he has the devil's own luck." Russell may have carried the heavier guns, but those of Forbes were the most quick-firing. Luck, however, was sometimes on Russell's side, and satisfied equanimity reigned once more in Printing House Square when *The Times* came in before all competitors with the news of Jules Favre's negotiations for the capitulation of Paris. Russell's steady support of the victorious side won much credit also for his paper. "I never heard sweeter music than last night," wrote Delane in 1872, "when the Empress of Germany sang your praises to me before a most brilliant audience at the Prussian Embassy. She said that she and her husband and her son and the whole German army owed you the deepest gratitude for your eloquent history of their achievements, that socially you were as agreeable as in literature you were distinguished, that she had made your acquaintance before the war and regretted that she had not seen you to renew her thanks, which, however, she begged I would communicate to you. I do so, but most inadequately, for I was so pleased that such justice should be done you by such a personage and before such an audience to report so accurately as I could have done had I been less interested. I hope you also will be pleased."[1] Probably he was pleased; for, like Delane himself, Russell frankly enjoyed such things. The picture of him at Versailles penned at the time by a genial satirist will be remembered:

[1] *Atkins*, ii., 233.

"A group had formed before the hotel near us, and our attention was drawn to its central figure. Dr. Russell, of *The Times*, was preparing to mount his war-horse. You know the sort of thing, he has described it himself over and over again. Bismarck at his horse's head, the Crown Prince holding his stirrup, and the old King of Prussia hoisting Russell into the saddle. When he was there, the distinguished public servant waved his hand in acknowledgement, and rode slowly down the street, accompanied by the *gamins* of Versailles, who even in their present dejection could not forbear a few involuntary cries of '*quel homme!*' Always unassuming, he alighted at the lodgings of the Grand Duke of Oldenburg, a potentate of the second or even the third order, who had beckoned to him from the window."[1]

Matthew Arnold quizzed *The Times* upon its attitude also in relation to the Black Sea question. The Russian Government took occasion of the war to denounce the clauses of the Treaty of Paris (1856) relating to the neutrality of the Black Sea, and Prince Gortchakoff's circular to that effect produced a great stir. Mr. Arnold made his Arminius von Thunder-ten-Tronckh speak very contemptuously of the British Government in this crisis:—

"Your great organ, *The Times*, not satisfied with itself conveying to other Powers in the most magnificent manner (a duty, to say the truth, it always fulfils) 'what England believes to be due from and to her,' keeps exhorting your Government to do the same, to speak some brave words, and to speak them 'with promptitude and energy.' I suppose your Government will do so. Lord Granville is now to speak! Probably he will have, as the French say, to execute himself; only do not suppose that we are under any delusion as to the sort of force he has behind him."

When Lord Granville spoke, Delane was taking a holiday in Italy, and the policy which he commended to his *locum tenens* was thus expressed:

"I most willingly accept firmness and plain speaking as a

[1] "Friendship's Garland," 1871, p. 111.

means of preventing war, and therefore approve Granville's reply to Gortchakoff, but I by no means accept it as an engagement binding us to consider the infraction of the treaty as a *casus belli*. Every one of our allies is equally bound, and it is no part of our duty to perform the whole police of the world. I am all for protesting as vigorously as possible, but not for undertaking any obligation which our allies will not share. Of course, if they join us, Russia will have to back down with much loss of dignity." [1]

The actual course of affairs was different. Russia gained her end, but not by the means which she first proposed. Prince Bismarck, acting in his *rôle* of "honest broker," proposed a Conference, which was held in London, and which accepted (with some modifications) the amendment of the Treaty of Paris desired by Russia. This was the solution which *The Times* supported.[2]

The policy of Mr. Gladstone's Government in this matter has been variously judged—as a triumph for Lord Granville's diplomacy, and as a humiliation for Great Britain. History takes a middle view; but it was the latter opinion that gained ground among the electorate at the time, and the feeling that the foreign policy of the Government was weak was increased by the *Alabama* arbitration. Ever since the American Civil War negotiations had been going on between the United States and Great Britain with regard to various matters arising out of the war, and more especially with regard to claims based on the depredations of the *Alabama*, a privateer which had managed to escape from Liverpool in 1862. The disturbance of the European equilibrium effected by the Franco-German war suggested to Lord Granville

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 277.
[2] See the leading articles of November 18, 21, 28, 1870.

the desirability of "putting an end to the silent ill-will which was endangering the friendship of the two great branches of the English race,"[1] and he determined to effect, if possible, a comprehensive settlement. To this purpose he devoted infinite patience and resource, and *The Times*, wiser than a decade before, lent its support to the policy of arbitration. Lord Granville corresponded with Delane almost daily on the subject, and in the anxious weeks in 1872, when the issue was in doubt owing to the ambiguous attitude of the United States in the matter of the "indirect claims," *The Times* often had early information or shrewd surmise of what was going on. The concessions of principle which this country had made and the terms of the award itself rendered the arbitration very unpopular with the British electorate, but Delane both supported the principle of arbitration and accepted the closing of the affair with "an immense sense of relief."[2]

The Government had meanwhile suffered in public estimation from some cases of mismanagement in home affairs; and when *The Times* began to be critical, some people thought it was because Mr. Gladstone had let Delane slip away from him.[3] But personal considerations had little to do with the case. Between Mr. Gladstone and Delane there had often been confidential intercourse, but never much of that tie which is bound by instinctive sympathy. And even if Delane had been as much attached to Mr. Gladstone as to Lord Palmerston, the personal relation would not seriously have affected the views of the paper. The

[1] *Fitzmaurice*, ii., 83.

[2] See the leading articles of September 16, 17, and 18, 1872.

[3] See above, p. 208, and compare Lord Granville's letter quoted (from *Dasent*, ii., 236) at the head of this chapter.

obvious explanation is the true one. Delane became critical of Mr. Gladstone's Administration because the Minister and his colleagues made mistakes and alienated the sympathy of the average Englishman. In 1871 Mr. Lowe's Budget included a tax on matches, a proposal which some have ascribed to the compelling felicity of the suggested motto for the impost—*ex luce lucellum*. Lowe was a personal friend of Delane and an old member of his staff, but *The Times* instantly opened fire on the proposal (April 21, 24, 25). In addition to valid economic objections, Delane perceived at once that the tax would raise a storm of popular opposition. His prompt and outspoken criticism gave lively satisfaction at Court. "I was so much obliged," wrote Lady Ely from Osborne, "for your interesting letter. The Queen also disapproves of the tax on matches, and has written a remonstrance on the subject to the Government. Her Majesty thinks in it only about the distress it will cause among the poorer classes."[1] The unpopularity caused by this short-lived proposal presently extended on other grounds to Mr. Gladstone. At the beginning of the session of 1872 there was a prodigious hubbub over two pieces of preferment in the Prime Minister's gift. The little village of Ewelme, in Oxfordshire, is still known to some for its watercress beds, to others for its golf-course, to more for its matchless group of church, almshouse and school. In the seventies it was in every party politician's mouth on account of "The Ewelme Scandal." By an Act passed in 1871 the presentation to the rectory was vested in the Crown, but it was appropriated to members of the University of Oxford. Mr. Gladstone

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 285.

proceeded to give it to a member of the University of Cambridge, who became for the purpose a member of the other university by a formal process of incorporation. *The Times* called attention to the affair, pronouncing the appointment to be at least "puzzling" (February 14). The puzzlement of plain minds was increased by another appointment which had been made possible by the same kind of colourable compliance with the law. Parliament had restricted the appointment of paid members of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council to persons who held or had previously held judicial office. Mr. Gladstone proceeded to appoint the Attorney-General (Sir Robert Collier), first making him for the purpose a judge in the Common Pleas. In each case the man appointed was personally well qualified, in neither case was there any motive of jobbery, and there was much else to be said on Mr. Gladstone's behalf which will be found recapitulated in Lord Morley's "Life"; but *The Times* expressed and helped to form a general feeling that "such incidents sow suspicion and distrust."[1] On "The Collier Scandal" the Government escaped defeat by 27 votes. "I did all I could," wrote Delane, "to persuade Stanhope & Co. to make their speeches, but not to go to a division to-night (February 16). They were perverse, and were beaten accordingly. The Government will have a majority in the Commons, and are safe from all dangers so long as the *Alabama* business is unsettled. *Then*, swift and just destruction will overwhelm them."[2]

Destruction came, however, in a manner which

[1] March 1, 1872; see also leading articles of February 12, 16, 19, and 20.
[2] *Dasent*, ii., 288. Delane continued, however, to support Gladstone, on the whole, against Disraeli; see below, p. 286, *n.*

Delane did not at first expect. Mr. Gladstone, undeterred by or unconscious of any signs of waning popularity, determined to devote the session of 1873 to the third of a great series of Irish reforms. Having disestablished the Church and reformed the land laws, he proceeded to tackle a thorny question which was not destined to find a settlement till thirty-five years later—the question of Irish university education. Delane went to Westminster to hear Mr. Gladstone introduce the Bill, and said to Manning, as they were leaving the House of Commons, "This is a Bill made to pass."[1] He wrote to the same effect in *The Times* (February 15). Like everyone else who heard the speech, he fell under the spell of the magician. But second thoughts were different. "The more the Bill is looked at," said *The Times* twelve days later, "the less it is liked." Irish Catholics were dissatisfied with a university from which theology, philosophy, and modern history were to be banished. English Radicals denounced "the gagging clauses," as they were called, which imposed penalties on any teacher who offended the religious convictions of his pupils. The debate on the second reading was long and animated. *The Times* had pleaded for compromise, but in vain. The Bill was rejected by a majority of 3 (March 11), and the day of Disraeli had come.

[1] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 439.

CHAPTER IX

DISRAELI: DELANE'S LATTER DAYS (1873-1879).

"I have been touched by Disraeli's departure from the House of Commons to enter upon his earldom. This and Delane's illness, marking that he cannot much longer rule *The Times*, seem to announce that a new hour is about to strike, and old actors on the stage to disappear."—ARCHBISHOP TAIT (1876).

THE defeat of the Irish University Bill on March 11, 1873, was the end of Mr. Gladstone's first tenure of power, though he remained in office for some months longer. Mr. Disraeli, in sending his antagonist back to those months of office without power, executed one of his most successful manœuvres. It occupied a week of lively political interest, "raising points with important constitutional bearings, and showing," adds Lord Morley, "a match between two unsurpassed masters of political sword-play." The factor which gave the victory to Mr. Disraeli is clear. He knew throughout exactly what he wanted and played consistently for it, while Mr. Gladstone was somewhat irresolute. Mr. Disraeli was firmly resolved to decline office, calculating, with perfect accuracy as the event showed, that a few more months, during which "a range of exhausted volcanoes" should occupy the Treasury Bench, would serve to swell his own triumph at the polls. Mr. Gladstone, on the other hand, was not quite sure which of two evils was the worse—immediate dissolution or a return to office. A dis-

solution on the Irish University Bill did not offer favourable ground, for his own party was divided on the subject; if he returned to office, he might be able to find or create a better issue; and if he could force Mr. Disraeli into office, mistakes might be made which again should help the Liberal cause. So, then, neither did Mr. Gladstone advise a dissolution, nor did Mr. Disraeli offer to become Minister on condition of being permitted to dissolve; and as the result of long and intricate discussions carried on between the combatants in communications to the Queen, Mr. Gladstone returned to office.

During the manœuvres which so resulted, Mr. Disraeli received daily support from *The Times*. When "Lothair" came out in 1870, Disraeli had been gratified by a favourable review in *The Times* and had written thus to Delane: "We have known each other now a very long time, and notwithstanding the harsh obstacles which political differences insensibly offer to social intimacy, have maintained relations of more than friendliness. I wish to cherish them, and that you should believe me with sincerity your obliged friend." [1] During the crisis of March, 1873, Delane proved a friend in need, but his support of the line which Disraeli was bent on taking was entirely independent; it was not that of a partisan, nor was it based on tactical considerations; it was given on grounds of public policy. In his diary for March 17, Delane records "a most curious interview with Disraeli at the House of Commons, describing his own interview with the Queen"; but Delane had taken his line several days before, at a time when it could not have been influenced by any hints from Disraeli.

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 261.

On the morning after the Government's defeat *The Times* had said that Mr. Gladstone must remain in office until a dissolution could conveniently come (March 12). On the two following days Disraeli was exhorted with much vehemence to educate his party into resisting the temptation of snatching at immediate office. In the leading articles of March 15 it was announced as matter of fact that this view of the case had prevailed, and that Mr. Gladstone would return. This was one of those "intelligent anticipations of events before they happen" which Delane's insight, aided by wide sources of information, enabled him frequently to make. The negotiations with the Queen were still in progress, and the solution of the crisis was not announced in Parliament until two days later (March 17). Delane, in his articles, started from the point that an immediate dissolution would be highly inconvenient, if not wholly impracticable. The crisis had occurred before the end of the financial year, and in those times the ordering of the year's finances within the financial year was as a law of the Medes and Persians. By one party or the other, therefore, the Queen's government had to be carried on with the existing Parliament. The question was whether it should be carried on by Mr. Gladstone, who, apart from Irish education, could still count upon a parliamentary majority, or by Mr. Disraeli, who would be in a minority. On public grounds *The Times* was strongly opposed to the latter alternative. It was impressed by "the national evils which result from attempts to maintain a Government with a minority in the House of Commons. When men have first seated themselves on the Treasury Bench, the attachment to power grows so strong that almost

everything is sacrificed to the cravings of its almost irresistible passion." The Conservative party had at some previous crises shown itself lacking in consistency and character. It had now the opportunity of retrieving its past. Let Mr. Disraeli see to it that the opportunity was well used. Such was the gist of the argument which was addressed day after day to the willing ears of Mr. Disraeli. Though Delane's line was taken on independent grounds, it exactly played Disraeli's game. The cogent articles in *The Times* may well have produced some restraining influence upon his more hungry followers. They prepared public opinion to regard the solution of the crisis, which Disraeli was bent upon obtaining, as the proper solution; and they may have had some effect in encouraging the Queen to prefer the arguments of Mr. Disraeli to those of Mr. Gladstone.

Disraeli's abstinence in March, 1873, had its reward in February, 1874, when Mr. Gladstone's bid for popular support by a promise to repeal the income tax proved unsuccessful, and the new House of Commons contained a homogeneous Conservative majority of 50. "In full crisis," wrote Delane in his diary on February 16. "The Government on the point of going out, but Gladstone clinging to the last moment. He determined at last to resign, and we announced it, though with some misgivings." These were unnecessary. On the day the announcement appeared Mr. Gladstone went to Windsor, and on the following morning Mr. Disraeli received the Queen's commands to form a Ministry. Delane was deeply interested alike in the fall of the one Minister and in the triumph of the other. The leading article in which Mr. Gladstone was dismissed and Mr. Disraeli welcomed is one

of the few written by Delane himself.[1] He knew both the men and had followed their strange eventful histories closely for more than thirty years. The zest with which he entered into the new situation came from a keen perception of the dramatic nature of the event. On the one side he saw in the causes which led to Mr. Gladstone's defeat an instance of pride before a fall. He recalled, as already mentioned,[2] the circumstances of Lord Palmerston's overthrow in 1858. "We sincerely believe," he wrote, "that no man ever made a more conscientious use than Mr. Gladstone of great authority; but it cannot be doubted that the feeling of personal ascendency and of popularity with the masses, if it encouraged him in arduous enterprises, inspired him also with a confidence which not infrequently misled him. High-handed acts which startle even those who are not at all constitutional precisians, and a disregard for the spirit and obvious intention of an Act of Parliament, are natural in one who thinks that he holds a general commission from the public. We do not wish to pursue this unsatisfactory and much-worn theme; the mistake is one very common in statesmen, and happily not at all difficult to rectify." Delane then drew a moral from the case of Lord Palmerston for Mr. Gladstone's edification. Lord Palmerston took the lesson of his defeat in 1858 at once, "and from that time to the day of his death his conduct was unexceptionable. Mr. Gladstone need not be supposed to have less sense or less discretion. He has received a proof of the uncertain tenure of public favour, he knows that the Liberal party has a

[1] See *Dasent*, ii., 305, 306, and *Sband*, p. 196.
[2] Above, p. 111.

claim on him and that he can best satisfy it by equanimity and patience." Mr. Gladstone's own view of the situation and of the claim which it made on him was different. He thought that he was entitled to rest; he doubted whether the country or his party had need of such active service as he could render. He went accordingly into partial retirement; not formally resigning the leadership of the Opposition, but allowing himself a large leave of absence. Delane thought that this ambiguous position was not favourable to the growth of a strong Opposition, and after some experience of it he said so with emphasis. "Let Mr. Gladstone definitely retire and there will be lamentation; but the broken ranks would close together and a new organ would be slowly evolved. Let him neither return nor withdraw, but appear comet-like at unknown periods and in unknown orbits, and the Opposition must remain an aggregate of atoms without so much as the arrangement that might issue out of their fortuitous concourse." "An article in *The Times* this morning," wrote Mr. Gladstone (January 14, 1875), "is undisguisedly aimed at getting rid of me." [1] Delane probably had good information, for on the same day Mr. Gladstone resigned the leadership of the Opposition. Neither he nor his critic foresaw the course of events which were to call him back to the front, to overthrow his rival, and to make him yet for three times Prime Minister of England. Before those events had fully developed, Delane's day was over, but the Eastern question in its earlier stages was to bring him once more into touch with Mr. Gladstone, as we shall hear in due course.

[1] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 504.

The triumph of Mr. Disraeli in 1874 was as interesting to Delane as the downfall of Mr. Gladstone. The equanimity and patience which Delane preached to Mr. Gladstone had been practised by Mr. Disraeli, and at last had received a full reward. "Mr. Disraeli is so completely master of the situation," wrote Delane in the article quoted above, "that the murmurs of the boldest die away at his approach. Has he not proved himself to have the gift of foreknowledge almost beyond the apprehension of mankind? Has he not led the Conservative party to a position of pre-eminence such as they have not enjoyed for thirty years?" During those thirty years Disraeli and Delane had been personal friends. The friendship had been started, if gossip may be trusted, by the exercise of an art in which Disraeli was a master. "A lady told me," says Sir Algernon West, "that she was present when Disraeli and Delane first met. Disraeli overwhelmed him with flattery. 'Did you like it?' said my friend to Delane afterwards. 'No,' he replied, 'but I like to think that Disraeli thought I was of sufficient importance to make it worth his while.'"[1] The year 1858 is given as the date of this recollection, and the lady's memory may have been at fault, for Disraeli and Delane were acquainted at least as early as 1844.[2] Disraeli had been a friend of Barnes and an occasional contributor to *The Times* during his editorship. It was natural that he should make the acquaintance of Barnes's successor, and Disraeli had a keen appreciation of the advantage of standing well with *The Times*. He angled—not always successfully—for favourable reviews of his books; he thought,

[1] "Recollections," ii., 241.

[2] The date of Disraeli's first letter to Delane: see *Dasent*, i., 44.

at one moment of difficulty, of "making Delane my confidant," for "some articles in *The Times*, done with discreet thunder, might do the business"; he failed, though he was "with Delane all the morning," to obtain the articles, but at another time he succeeded in procuring the prompt insertion of a letter to which he attached great importance. He took trouble, too, in order to get good reports of his speeches in *The Times*, and on one occasion went straight from the Front Opposition Bench to Printing House Square. "I spoke exactly three hours," he wrote to his wife (August 30, 1848). "All my friends delighted; universally admitted my greatest speech. I am now going to Delane—God knows how long and how often I shall be there, as the speech must be eight columns at least." Delane often did his friend a good turn; as, for instance, in explaining away the plagiarism from Thiers in Disraeli's panegyric upon the Duke of Wellington.[1] Yet though Delane liked and in some ways admired Disraeli, they had generally been politically opposed, and the editor never allowed personal friendship to sap his independence.[2] But now, in 1874, there seemed little need for political controversy. The Opposition was divided and disheartened. The country was in a mood to take a legislative rest after the strenuous years of Mr. Gladstone's first Administration. "We do not know," wrote Delane, "whether we are entering on a period

[1] "The Life of Disraeli," iii., 394. See also in the same volume, pp. 5, 109, 131, 267.

[2] Disraeli was once asked his "honest opinion of Delane," and did not give it. The scene was a dinner-table at Chief Justice Cockburn's, and Delane had left the table early, as he was privileged to do. Disraeli was asked the question by an indiscreet guest. "Should the news be brought to us," replied Disraeli, "that Delane has been found dead in his cab before we part this evening, I will tell you what I think of him" (Sir W. Fraser's "Disraeli and his Day," p. 82).

of sobriety in legislation, but there is some warrant that we may hope for it. The Ministry are at the head of a homogeneous majority, and they are under no compulsion to introduce measures for the purpose of securing the support of any section of their nominal antagonists. The true way to attract favour—at least, for the time being—is to walk in the old paths." Mr. Disraeli had other ideas in his mind; but for a time things went quietly, and the Government's unambitious programme of domestic legislation received the cordial support of *The Times*. "Dizzy makes a good fight of it," wrote Delane to Russell, "and always answers to the whip when he is called upon, but he is very old and shaky." [1] Not too old, however, to strike out a new line and start upon great adventures; and in some of these Delane was not entirely disposed to follow him.

Before the war-cloud burst, however, in Eastern Europe, there was a passing storm in the West, which was the occasion of one of the greatest journalistic hits ever made by *The Times*. It was due primarily to the famous Paris correspondent, M. de Blowitz, but the affair was characteristic also of Delane's methods. Henri Stephan Opper de Blowitz had begun his connexion with *The Times* by giving temporary assistance first to Laurence Oliphant and then to Frederick Hardman during the years 1871 to 1874. Delane made the acquaintance of Blowitz during a visit to Paris in the spring of 1872, and on that occasion Blowitz was able to bring his abilities prominently to the editor's notice. They had been to Versailles together to hear Thiers speak. "What a pity," said Delane at parting, "that things are so badly orga-

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 324.

nized! If we could have given that speech from one end to the other in to-morrow's paper, what a glorious thing it would have been!" Delane left for London directly afterwards, and on opening *The Times* next morning found a two-column report of the speech. The moment Delane left, Blowitz had sat down, and reported the speech from memory, and he transmitted it to London. A correspondent capable of such a *tour de force* was clearly a valuable recruit, and, on the death of Hardman, Blowitz was appointed chief correspondent of *The Times* in Paris (February 1, 1875). Not many weeks passed before he sent to Delane information of the most startling kind. It was to the effect that Europe was on the verge of war. France was beginning to recuperate after the war of 1870—1871, her army was being reconstituted, and the German Government, or the military party, was proposing to crush her once more. The threat, according to Blowitz's information, was real; the danger was instant; the best, and perhaps the only, chance of peace lay in publicity, so that the influence of the Czar and others might be brought to bear in order to restrain the Germans. Delane felt the force of all this, if the information were correct, but could it be true that Germany was meditating such a crime? He said that he could not make himself responsible for "such an insinuation against a civilized nation unless absolute proof were forthcoming." Blowitz set to work to procure proofs. Delane sent his best man, Thomas Chenery, over to Paris to pursue independent researches, and he himself made full inquiries in London. Having verified his correspondent's information, after a fortnight's investigation Delane published the article (May 6) under

the heading "A French 'Scare,'" accompanying it by a "leader" in which the importance of the news was emphasized, but in due diplomatic fashion it was taken as something barely credible and yet firmly believed in Paris. The effect produced by the revelation of the German plot was instantaneous, universal, and profound. Both the Russian Emperor and Queen Victoria appealed to the German Emperor to stay his hand. The German Emperor denied the truth of the Queen's allegations, and a sentence in his letter is worth recalling to-day in the reign of his grandson: "No one is more thoroughly convinced than the writer that he who provokes a war in Europe will have the whole of public opinion against him and will accordingly have no ally, no *neutrale bienveillant*, but rather adversaries." Bismarck's precise part in the plot is open to some question,[1] but he never forgave Queen Victoria for her intervention. The situation, however, was saved. "I did not need your very interesting letter," wrote Delane to Blowitz (May 18), "to appreciate the entire success of that startling public letter by which you alarmed Europe to a sense of its imminent danger. It has been of the greatest public service, and, as I sincerely believe, has done even much to spare the world the horrors of another war. No greater honour than to have averted war is within the reach of the journalist." Another well-known journalist has contrasted the pains taken by

[1] References to some of the authorities will be found in Sir Sidney Lee's "Life of Queen Victoria," p. 432, to which should be added Chap. V. of "My Memoirs," by H. S. de Blowitz (1903). Blowitz received his information from the Duc Decazes, the French Foreign Minister, who showed him a despatch from the French Ambassador at Berlin. The theory of Blowitz, given in his "Memoirs," is that the plot was confined to Moltke and the military party; that Bismarck did not approve it, but feared that Moltke would persuade the Emperor; that Bismarck accordingly gave hints to France, in order that the plot might be scotched.

Delane to verify the startling letter before publishing it with the rashness with which, when Delane had disappeared from the scene, *The Times* accepted the clumsy forgeries of Pigott.[1]

Upon the Eastern question, which next absorbed public attention, Delane took a characteristically moderate view. Disraeli's policy of rash adventure, as opponents called it, or of far-seeing Imperialism, as it seemed to supporters, was ushered in by a stroke which many of the former came in the end to recognise as masterly. This was the purchase by the British Government of the Khedive's shares in the Suez Canal Company. The stroke owed much to the initiative of another journalist than Delane, who, however, was early apprised of the scheme. Delane had from the first believed in the advantage which the project of M. de Lesseps would ultimately confer upon the British Empire. Lord Palmerston, as is well known, regarded the enterprise as fraught with danger, and in 1859 there was correspondence between him and Delane on the subject. "It shall not be made," Palmerston once said; "it cannot be made; it will not be made."[2] Delane was of the opposite opinion. "It will be so far a British canal," he wrote, "that it will be traversed by British ships, devoted to British traffic, and maintained by British tolls. We are justified as a nation in looking out for the best and safest highway to the East, for the finest realm of the East pertains to the British Crown. If the Suez Canal should ever become a reality, it would be for our benefit and not for our disadvantage." On reading

[1] T. H. S. Escott, "Masters of English Journalism: a Study of Personal Forces," 1911, p. 184.

[2] Grant Duff's "Notes from a Diary, 1886–9," i., 81.

those remarks in *The Times* Palmerston had gone at once to his desk and written to Delane a closely argued remonstrance extending to nearly seven quarto pages, but Delane had not been converted.[1] It was therefore with the greater pleasure that on November 25, 1875, as he notes in his diary, he "received the news of the purchase of the Suez Canal." The leading article in *The Times* next morning made "the somewhat startling announcement," and warmly commended Disraeli for his sagacity and resolution. The early announcement of the important piece of news, which probably came from New Court, was the last of Delane's journalistic coups.

The purchase of the canal shares was a prelude to Disraeli's Imperialist piece. A few weeks later he made the Queen Empress of India, and Delane congratulated him heartily on the "happy idea" (February 9). Presently events occurred in the Near East which greatly moved public feeling in this country and gave Disraeli an opportunity to play a prominent part in European politics. Early in 1875 Bosnia and Herzegovina had risen in revolt against the Turks. Presently Bulgaria rose also. The Turks retaliated with the Bulgarian "Atrocities," which set Mr. Gladstone aflame with righteous indignation. Servia went to war. Russia espoused the cause of the oppressed nationalities. The Turks, profiting by differences of opinion among the Great Powers, were disinclined to give those nationalities any effective self-government. The "Eastern question," which dominated British politics for some years, was thus

[1] For the article in *The Times*, see December 16, 1859. Palmerston's letter is printed in *Dasent*, i., 326—328.

in full blast, and the last of the duels between Disraeli and Gladstone began. It was also the last crisis in which Delane played any part, and the call found him a broken man.

He had been very ill in the early part of the year (1876), but, on recovering some measure of health, had remained at work in London throughout the summer. He was deeply interested in the Eastern question and had views about it which, though they found little favour with extremists on either side, were clear and consistent in his own mind. As at the time of the Crimean war, so now he was at once averse from bolstering up the Turks and suspicious of Russia's intentions. The difficulty had been that no middle course had been found which should check Russian encroachment without supporting Turkish misrule. Delane, profiting by experience, recognised the difficulty and hoped that this time it might be avoided. "Of course," he had written in connexion with the Russian Black Sea circular in 1870, "we must try to keep out of another war in support of the blessed old Turk."[1] And in 1876 his hope was that Great Britain might secure internal reform in Turkey while at the same time preventing single-handed intervention by Russia. He recognised fully that the reform must be sweeping. A day or two before Mr. Gladstone put out his famous pamphlet, Delane met him at dinner (September 4). "We had an interesting little party," wrote Mr. Gladstone, "at Granville's. I had a long talk with Delane. We, he and I, are much of one mind in thinking the Turks must go out of Bulgaria, though retaining a titular supremacy if they like. Between ourselves, Gran-

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 276.

ville a little hangs back from this, but he could not persuade me to hold it back." [1] "It" was, I suppose, the "bag and baggage" passage in the pamphlet. The pamphlet was reviewed by *The Times* in a leading article (September 7), which dismissed as "portentous nonsense," good enough only for "the electors of Bucks," the idea that it was a British interest "to maintain unabridged the authority of the Ottoman Government."

Delane was tired out. The new Viceroy of India, Lord Lytton, had begged him to take an extended holiday and join the Imperial assemblage at Delhi. The invitation came in September, but Delane declined it and went as usual to Dunrobin, hoping that a few weeks' rest in the Highlands would restore him to health and vigour. He had not been long away when an article in his paper caused him to cut his holiday short and return at once to London. On what day the article appeared I am unable to say precisely, and contradictory accounts have been given. According to his friend, Mr. Shand, Delane was strongly pro-Russian, and "took the first train on reading a pro-Turkish leader, in order to put things straight before the error was irretrievable." [2] According to Mr. Dasent, "the paper, in Delane's absence, had published a strong pro-Russian article, and he thought it desirable to transfer the handling of the Eastern question to other and safer hands." The latter account of the matter is corroborated by Abraham Hayward, who wrote to Lady Waldegrave on October 7: "Delane has just returned from Dunrobin very philo-Turk." [3] The confusion among these authorities

[1] Morley's "Gladstone," ii., 552.
[2] "Days of the Past," pp. 195, 196.
[3] "Correspondence of Abraham Hayward," ii., 266.

reflects the ambiguous attitude of the paper at the time. A study of the actual articles, in the light of what has been said above about Delane's view of the Eastern question, leaves, however, no room for doubt in the matter. During September the paper took what may be called an anti-Turk line. Delane, as we have seen, was by no means philo-Turk, but neither was he Russophil, and towards the end of September the paper was tending more and more in the latter direction. Delane hurried back to steer his craft into a middle course. He was afraid that under the impulse of Mr. Gladstone's agitation his writers were committing the paper too far towards sympathy with the idea of Russian intervention. The gentle art of curvature was again called into play,[1] and Delane was very pleased with the way in which it was practised. A series of articles from an accomplished pen executed "a retreat from a false position so skilfully as scarcely to have been perceived until the movement was completed, and the coveted position once attained has ever since been most successfully defended."[2] So Delane wrote to Dr. Wace on October 20; but there was an eagle eye which had detected the progress of the movement. "We have got into a pretty mess," wrote Mr. Gladstone to Abraham Hayward on October 10. "*The Times* appears to be thoroughly emasculated. It does not pay to read a paper which next week is sure to refute what it has demonstrated this week. It ought to be prohibited to change sides more than a certain number of times in a year." "After reading *The Times* this morning (October 11)," replied Mr. Hayward, "you will be tempted to improve

[1] See above, p. 106.
[2] *Dasent*, ii., 328.

on your proposal and prohibit them from changing sides more than once in twenty-four hours. The first article is anti-Russian, and the second still more decidedly anti-Turk." [1] Quite so, Delane might have said; the two articles together expressed his views. He was strongly anti-Turk, in the sense that he was resolutely set against any policy of intervention to bolster up Turkish misgovernment; he was anti-Russian, in the sense that he mistrusted the policy of the Russian Government. He was anti-Disraeli, when he thought that the Prime Minister's policy was secretly tending in the former direction; he was anti-Gladstone, when he thought that Mr. Gladstone's agitation tended to encourage the development of the crisis in the latter direction. He pinned his faith upon Lord Derby and Lord Salisbury, and hoped for a peaceful solution of the crisis which should reconcile British interests with the effective release of oppressed nationalities from Turkish misrule. The advocacy of a middle line such as this was open to question on the point of feasibility, and, apart from such question, necessarily presented an aspect of inconsistency, as first one side of the case and then the other was expounded. Perhaps, too, something of dubiety must be attributed, as one of his friends thought, to Delane's failing health. "I have seen a great deal of Delane lately," wrote Hayward to Lady Waldegrave on October 20. "I am convinced that his vacillation is a good deal owing to the state of his health. He told me yesterday that we might depend on his not changing again on the essential point of non-interference." And again on November 20: "Delane is greatly

[1] *Hayward*, ii., 267.

improved in health and *The Times* in consistency." [1] The "improvement," in the judgment of the Gladstonians, lay in this, that Delane, more and more distrusting Lord Beaconsfield's aims, laid constant stress upon the undesirability of any British interference merely on behalf of the Turks. Delane thought that events might necessitate an active defence of British interests; and he is reported to have said, on what was probably his last visit to the Houses of Parliament, that one thing consoled him, namely "that if there is to be a war, Disraeli will conduct it." [2] But so long as he effectually controlled *The Times*, he did not cease to hope for peace, and to discountenance the idea of a Turkophil war. "The Government must be perfectly well aware," said *The Times* on October 19, "that neither Parliament nor the country would ever hear for a moment of our going to war on behalf of Turkey. She has had her opportunities—only too many; she has thrown them all away, and it would be criminal folly to expend the smallest amount of English blood or treasure in her support. Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Derby by their uniform language have given a sufficient pledge against our being betrayed into such an error. They have told us again and again, with ever increasing emphasis, that they must consider English interests exclusively. That exclusiveness, if a little questionable previously, must now be maintained without qualification." When Lord Beaconsfield made his famous and menacing speech at the Guildhall about a second and a third campaign, Delane sought to take off its edge. "We must pare

[1] *Hayward*, ii., 270, 273.
[2] Sir W. Fraser's "Disraeli and his Day," p. 83.

down what appears to be too fanciful, we must abate pretensions that seem extravagant, and sometimes we must supplement what he says by facts we remember which he has forgotten." Everything would depend on the spirit in which Lord Salisbury proceeded to the execution of his special mission to Constantinople: "he must make the good government of the disturbed provinces his supreme policy."

The Conference at Constantinople was, however, a failure, and the Russo-Turkish War ensued, being followed in turn by British preparations and "peace with honour," as Lord Beaconsfield claimed, at Berlin; but these later events do not concern us here, for in November, 1877, Delane retired from the editorship of *The Times*, and for some months before that date his grasp upon the helm and the powers of his mind had been relaxed. At the end of 1875 he had already been editor for thirty-four years. They were years of constant strain, and he was worn out. On the day that Parliament met in 1876 he was attacked with acute bronchitis. "I have been ill for weeks," he wrote on February 17,[1] "and this was only the explosion; but it was very violent, and I had time for a very deliberate survey of that undiscovered region from whose bourne no traveller returns." He recovered from the attack, and was begged to give up night work, but he would not surrender. "Please, remember," said Lord Granville to him, "that what Shakespeare says about a giant and his strength equally applies to a man with a constitution of iron."[2] He resolved, however, to persevere with the whole duties of his office, though

[1] To W. H. Russell, *Atkins*, ii., 262.
[2] *Dasent*, ii., 324.

the constitution of iron was in fact undermined. "I am done, I am done," he said several times to Dr. Russell in August, adding "Dear Billy, it's all up with me."[1] But he would not give in. "Delane looks ill," wrote Abraham Hayward in October, "but has no thought of retiring or even taking an additional holiday."[2] And again a little later (November 3, 1876): "I have dined frequently with Delane of late; he is very much altered." "I am pretty nearly used up," he wrote himself in the following March; and Russell, who saw him in April, wrote: "Ah me! how broken he is, to be sure: thin, old, bowed, speaking slowly with glassy eye. My dear friend, how I wish I could get him away, but he is incarnate obstinacy."[3] He still held on; he could not break with the daily habit of thirty-five years or more; and he excused his "obstinacy" by the thought that he "united so many of the threads" in the still tangled Eastern question that his retirement would be a public inconvenience. That he is not indispensable is the last lesson that a man such as Delane learns. But at last something happened which opened his eyes: he could no longer mount his horse; it was a test like Lord Palmerston's climbing of an iron railing; he felt that the time for retirement had well nigh come, and the end of the year was talked of as the date. His absence from familiar haunts was noticed in the *World*:—

"Along the Row, I seek, but seek in vain
The portly presence of great John Delane;
Where are they hid—in Cliveden's proud alcove—
The ruddy features of our genial Jove?

[1] *Atkins*, ii., 264.
[2] *Hayward*, ii., 266.
[3] *Atkins*, ii., 276.

Does Highclere hold him? or at Strawberry's board
Feasts he with Frances, talks with Carlingford?
Quien sabe? Still I must his presence mourn,
And hope, with hundreds, for his safe return."[1]

Though, as Delane used to say, publicity was his trade, yet publicity about himself was the thing he greatly abhorred, and nothing troubled him more, in thinking of retirement, than "what I own I dread—having to face the personal Press."[2] In August (1877) he went to Homburg. Sir William Fraser, who often dined with him on the terrace there, found him trying to be cheerful, but looking very melancholy. "One evening I quoted some lines of Moore; he burst into tears."[3] Delane knew that he was about to part from all the links that bound him to active life. He returned to Printing House Square, and threw himself, yet for a few weeks, upon the full tide of his accustomed duties; but his strength was gone. "I found Delane," wrote Russell on October 22, "in the old chair in the old room, but oh, so changed in everything else: no papers, no piles of proofs, no mass of letters, no editor's work in fact. Well, it was to me a sad interview indeed. I am very fond of him. He was ever my champion, my guide sometimes, my friend always."[4] On November 8 Delane paid his last visit to *The Times* office. He had been editor for thirty-six years and a half. "I have not belied my destiny," he said, "but worked on as long as I could, and only struck work when there was no longer the power of working."

Separated from *The Times*, Delane had little of life

[1] July 25, 1877.
[2] Letter to W. H. Russell, *Atkins*, ii., 276.
[3] "Disraeli and his Day," p. 84.
[4] *Atkins*, ii., 277.

left to him. After a short visit to Cannes at the beginning of 1878, he retired to his country house at Ascot Heath. He bore increasing malady with uncomplaining fortitude, and died on November 22, 1879. He was buried beside his father and mother in the churchyard at Easthampstead.

Delane hated self-advertisement. *The Times* was ever in his mind, but seldom in his conversation, and he never allowed his name to appear in the paper. His old colleagues respected their chief's feeling, and the obituary notice of him in *The Times* was reticent and restrained almost to the point of coldness. It was in the columns of friendly rivals that the warmest appreciations of him appeared. "We do not hesitate to say," wrote the *Pall Mall Gazette*, "that as long as his mind retained its vigour he had not his equal in all Europe." He was "the ablest editor," said the *Standard*, "that has ever been associated with the English Press." But the special ground on which "his name will always be mentioned with honour and admiration by all who have adopted journalism as a profession is that everything he did tended to lift it above the enervating influences of political servility and the mechanical usages of party compliance."[1]

[1] The article in the *Standard* is said to have been written by Mr. Alfred Austin.

CHAPTER X

THE INFLUENCE OF DELANE.

"Some were sure that the great newspaper governed all England, and others that England governed the newspaper. Philosophic politicians traced events to what they called 'public opinion.' With almost the same meaning women and practical men simply spoke of '*The Times*.' "—KINGLAKE.

THE secret of journalistic influence is elusive: those who seek it are many, those who find it few. A capitalist with large resources once asked an editor of some experience to say wherein the secret consists. "I see my way to getting large circulation, but how am I to get influence? Tell me that." What the editor said in that particular case does not concern us here; but in this chapter I propose to answer the question in the case of *The Times* under Delane. The record in preceding chapters has shown how great was the authority of the paper; how wide the personal influence of the editor. By way of conclusion I shall endeavour to collect from the record the vehicles, the methods, and the limits of that authoritative influence, and then to inquire more generally what is the relation of a great newspaper to the formation of public opinion—of the opinion which is the seat of sovereignty in a democratic State.

The success of any man is due in part to circumstances, and in one important respect Delane was favoured by fortune. Comparatively little of his time and thought was occupied in what sometimes imposes a heavy disability upon an editor—namely,

dissension with the proprietor, or proprietors, of the paper. The relation between proprietor and editor, admitting of infinite variety of smooth or rough, is a rock upon which many a journalistic barque has come to grief. There are two sources of trouble: money and control. If a paper loses money, or if the editor and proprietor hold divergent views as to the supreme command, a crisis is sure sooner or later to come. A proprietor who is ready at once to pay the piper and to have no voice in calling the tune is as rare as he is to the editor precious. I have been told of two distinguished editors with whom it was a matter of friendly dispute which of them could claim to have caused a proprietor to incur the greater expense in the dissemination of sound literature and good journalism. If neither proprietor ever fell out with either of the claimants (each of whom was apt to insist on his own way), those proprietors were two in a thousand, and, as an old journalist myself, I take off my hat to their memory. A rich man may keep a newspaper, as another a yacht or a stud, or whatever it may be; but if the outgoings are constant, while he has little or none of the fun, he is likely to tire of so costly and unsatisfying a toy. Either he appoints a new editor, or the editor seeks a new proprietor to take over the paper. Then, again, even if the newspaper makes no great drain upon a proprietor's pocket, he may have journalistic or political views of his own to promote, or personal ambitions to push, which come into collision with the control of the paper by the editor. In such case the editor holds but a precarious, unless he be willing to accept an inglorious, tenure of his office. From all these anxieties, which have haunted, harassed or destroyed the editors of

many a paper before and after his time, Delane was happily free. *The Times* throughout his editorship was financially prosperous. He was paid a handsome salary, and a half-yearly dividend on the profits of the paper as well. "I thank you very heartily," he wrote to Mr. Walter in 1861, "for what you are pleased to call 'my share of the spoils.' I have no claim to any share, and I look on each dividend as a fresh donation, and am grateful accordingly."[1] Presently the editor's emoluments were increased: such increment was well earned, and the proprietors could doubtless well afford it; the stress of competition, and other factors which may conceivably have affected the commercial prosperity of the older journals, did not make themselves felt in the days of Delane. Nor was he worried by any disputes about editorial control. In this matter, again, he was favoured by circumstances. The first Mr. John Walter (1776—1847) under whom he served—the second of the line, and the second founder (as he may be called) of *The Times*—was a masterful man, who in earlier days had in considerable measure been his own editor; but he was long past his prime when Delane became editor. How quickly, surely, and completely the young Delane filled the place we have seen. The old man quarrelled with Delane's father, whose connexion with *The Times* was terminated in 1846, "but towards myself," wrote Delane, "his kindness was undeviating and extreme." The third John Walter (1818—1894), who became principal proprietor upon his father's death in 1847, was of Delane's age; but by that time the editor's reputation was made. The new proprietor was perhaps under no strong tempta-

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 26.

tion to interfere unduly with an editor who was both powerful and successful: it was a case of a new proprietor coming in to a well-established editor, not of a new editor coming in to a proprietor already in power. Mr. Walter, however, took his position very seriously; and, though he may have been a man of less natural force than his father, he had decided opinions and was determined in sticking to them. These are traits which tend to become more accentuated with the lapse of years or exercise of power, and the personal impressions of Mr. Walter which are best known [1] are dated two decades after the time of Delane. Still, from the first day of his official connexion with Mr. Walter to the last, Delane had to reckon with a proprietor who was very far indeed from the thought or habit of abdicating the powers which he possessed. He had, it is true, other interests than those centred in Printing House Square. He was a country gentleman with a passion for building, and he was a Member of Parliament. In connexion with *The Times*, he was concerned in the paper-making and the printing.[2] All these interests were, however, in his mind subsidiary to his sense of responsibility for the conduct of the paper. During the session he was in the habit of coming down to the office at night when the House rose, and staying there till two or three in the morning. During the recess, when the family were at Bear Wood, he took up his quarters in Printing House Square and stayed there most of the week. He thought nothing of breaking off a holiday tour in the middle if some unforeseen occur-

[1] By Mr. G. W. Smalley in his "Studies of Men" (1895) and by Mr. J. R. Thursfield in the "Dictionary of National Biography" (1899)

[2] The "Walter Press," first set up in *The Times* office in 1869, was the pioneer of all modern newspaper machines.

rence seemed to render his presence at headquarters desirable. That in such conditions there was no jar or fret between proprietor and editor during their long period of collaboration shows that there must have been much good sense in surrender on the one side and much tact in the exercise of self-assertion on the other. All appointments had to go before Mr. Walter for approval. He liked to have his say even in some properly editorial matters, and there is a letter in which the editor, describing the arrival of a messenger from Bear Wood, anticipated "some fuss about a leader or a review."[1] If a special correspondent did well or ill, a letter from the proprietor was often sent in addition to anything which the editor might have to say. Once a year Mr. Walter entertained the staff ceremoniously, and on other occasions invited chosen members to dine and sleep at Bear Wood. "I look on such invitations," said Delane to Russell, "as royal 'commands,' and I think you had better follow an example which has been approved by long practice."[2] The reminder was probably timely, for "Billy" Russell was notoriously careless about invitations, but Delane's note also throws incidental light upon the relations between the proprietor, the editor, and the staff. The reference to royalty gives the clue. The proprietor was, in some matters, the constitutional monarch; the editor was his prime minister. When Mr. Walter was at Bear Wood he often received, folded in his copy of *The Times*, a letter from Delane written after the paper had gone to press. Just so the leader of the House of Commons writes a report of the debates to the Sovereign. Mr.

[1] *Dasent*, ii., 279.
[2] *Atkins*, i., 272.

Walter and Delane were on excellent terms because each respected the functions of the other. The editor was loyally punctilious in all proper deference. The proprietor had complete confidence in the editor, and we have heard in a previous chapter Delane's tribute to Mr. Walter's "loyalty."[1] He never interfered or quarrelled, and if his influence on Delane's conduct of the paper contributed something to the common result, it was in much the same way as that in which the influence of a constitutional Sovereign, of average ability and a strong sense of responsibility, may make itself felt in the policy of a great and popular Minister. Even so, the friction which often accompanies any sort of dual control would hardly have been avoided if there had not been an underlying consent of wills and some bond of natural sympathy between Mr. Walter and Delane. In yet a third way Delane was fortunate in his proprietors. Father and son alike—John Walter II. and III.—held a high view of their position and responsibility as principal proprietors of the leading English newspaper. Virtue, it has been said, is easy on £10,000 a year, and *The Times* in the days of Delane secured to its proprietor an ample fortune. To maintain a high standard, to be faithful to dignified traditions, is not difficult when such respect is profitable. Yet this way of stating the case, though true, is not the whole truth. Lord Palmerston, in a letter to Queen Victoria upon the elements of journalism, laid it down that every newspaper is essentially a commercial enterprise. And so, with rare exceptions, it is; the cases are few and far between in which a newspaper survives for any considerable space of time, and maintains a position of

[1] See above, p. 194.

large influence, without being a commercial success. Much the same may be said of other comparable activities. The doctor, the lawyer, the author, looks to receive pecuniary reward, as well as the proprietor of a newspaper, or a mill, or a store. Yet there is a vital difference between what Ruskin called "the fee-first men" and those to whom the fee is not the entirely dominant consideration. A man of push and go was once asked to describe a newspaper. A newspaper, he said, is a means of making money, and a ridiculously easy means to any one who thoroughly masters the tricks of the trade. The proprietors of *The Times*, I am sure, would have disclaimed altogether such an account of the matter, and to a large extent they might have done so with perfect sincerity. The members of the Walter family with whom successively Delane had to do, kept, indeed, a close scrutiny, I do not doubt, upon the balance-sheet, and the editor's influence would, I dare say, have waned if the balance had been on the wrong side. But, on the other hand, if any question had arisen between making more money in the one scale and losing some dignity in the other, the answer would have been given on the better side; there would have been no inclination to take the cash and let the credit go. The owners of *The Times* took an honourable pride in the paper, and had the kind of feeling for its traditions that is cherished in the case of many an old-established business or ancestral estate. The conditions of newspaper enterprise at the present day are different, and, though there are some survivals of the older tradition, another order of ideas is in the ascendant.[1] One

[1] There are some good remarks on this subject in Mr. Dibblee's monograph on "The Newspaper."

secret, then, of Delane's influence was that he was in a position to make the gaining of influence, rather than of money, the essential business of his editorship. He owed this freedom to the circumstances of his time and the character of the proprietors with whom he was associated. Other secrets of his influence resided in his own powers, ideas, and methods.

The principal secret of Delane's influence is to be found in his independence. But before we pass to consider this point, one or two preliminary observations must be made. Independence will not of itself give influence to a newspaper. The organ of a mere individual, the candid "review" of an Ishmael, or even the independent "review" of a coterie, will seldom obtain a wide influence. The independence that "keeps man from man and breaks the social tie" may easily be prized too highly by him who aspires to conduct an organ of public opinion. Nor, again, could any independence on Delane's part, however ably it was expressed, have given him the authority and influence which he possessed, if it were not that *The Times* of his day was in all respects the leading newspaper. In 1855 one of Lord John Russell's political friends[1] prepared for him a memorandum on the state of the Press. "*The Times*," said the writer, "has become omnipotent and despotic from the consummate ability with which it is conducted. It is on this account read with avidity by all classes and by men of all parties." The consummate ability was shown in all departments. *The Times* under Delane made hits, as we have seen, in special articles; it attracted letters from distinguished persons; its parliamentary and other reports were fuller and better

[1] The Right Hon. Edward Ellice, for whom see above, p. 168.

than those of other papers[1]; its service of foreign correspondence was unequalled; its writers in all spheres were educated men of good, and often of brilliant, parts. And Delane, as I have already described, kept a firm hold over all the departments. The paper was carefully edited throughout, and accuracy was generally attained. In his diary for December 31, 1866, Delane notes in his retrospect of the year as something unusual that he had suffered "two vexations, having been imposed upon by false news." There have been, and perhaps there are, journals of which the cynical saying is almost justified: "that cannot be true, for I saw it in the paper." If a statement appeared in *The Times* of Delane the presumption, at any rate, was that it was correct. His paper was, then, the best of the papers; and if it had not been such, its influence would have been less; but even so, the influence would have been less, and other, than it was except for its marked independence.

The independence with which all who worked with Delane noted as his governing characteristic may be considered under three aspects. He was independent personally; next, though often semi-official, the paper was independent of the Government of the day; and, lastly, it was independent of party ties. On the

[1] A letter from Mr. Gladstone to his wife on the occasion of the famous debate of December 16—17, 1852 (see above, p. 60), shows how eagerly politicians turned to the parliamentary reports in *The Times*. Mr. Gladstone had made a great speech, but after it was finished remembered "a gross omission." "When I came home," he wrote, "I thought it would be good for me to be mortified. Next morning I opened *The Times*, which I thought *you* would buy, and *was* mortified when I saw it did not contain my speech, but a mangled abbreviation. Such is human nature, at least mine." The length of the speech and the very late hour at which it was delivered explain the abbreviation, for which, however, amends were made next day. "But in *The Times* of to-day," continued Mr. Gladstone, "you will see a very curious article descriptive of the last scene of the debate" (*Morley*, i., 439).

first point the record given in previous chapters speaks loudly for itself; but so persistent were the misunderstandings which found expression in memoirs of Delane's time, that some examination of them will not be superfluous. A memorandum by Lord Granville, written in 1855, as mentioned in earlier chapters,[1] discusses the relations between Ministers and journalists. He had been accused by the Duke of Newcastle of undue intimacy with *The Times*. "Public men," he wrote in reply, "have three ways of communicating with writers in the Press: 1st, showing them social civilities; 2nd, furnishing them with facts and arguments which need not be kept secret, and which may be useful in determining public opinion; and 3rd, imparting to them official secrets which ought not to be divulged." To any charge under the second or third of these heads Lord Granville gave a denial. The third course appeared to him "simply dishonourable," and he "solemnly declared" that he had never adopted it. "The second mode," he said, "requires tact, and has disadvantages as well as advantages, but is perfectly legitimate." He had, however, never or scarcely ever adopted it, "partly from caution, perhaps a little from indolence." To the first mode of communicating with writers in the Press Lord Granville pleaded guilty:—

"Mr. Delane and Mr. Reeve have frequently dined with me, and have come to Lady Granville's parties. I have for some time found it entailed personal inconvenience from the impressions which it creates, but I am sure that, on public grounds, nothing can be so mischievous as to exclude from all community of interest with the higher classes, and all intercourse with public men, those who by their pen can exercise such enormous influence for good or for bad." [2]

[1] Above, pp. 13, 92.
[2] *Fitzmaurice*, i., 91—92.

It was often supposed that the admission of the editor of *The Times* to intercourse with "the higher classes" was regarded by him also as an act of gracious condescension to be received on bended knee. A great man, who when angry was too prone to impute motives, used to accuse Delane of personal subservience. He was, according to John Bright, a "wretch," and a "ruffian" who subordinated his views "to serve patrons whom he met in the dining rooms of the West End."[1] That Delane's views often coincided with those of such persons is true; but they did not stand to him in the relation of patrons to client, nor were his views dictated by them. He was independent and fearless; neither the smiles of the West End, nor the anger of the official oligarchy, nor the frowns of the Court, ever caused him to deflect his own judgment. He received favours, it is true; but he never paid for them by any surrender of his independence, and he gave as much as he received. "We are very old friends," wrote Lord Granville to him in 1870; "I have only tried to influence you a very few times, and I do not know that I ever succeeded. But you have done me a thousand great favours in your professional as well as in your personal character."[2] Not every one in high place understood Delane so well. Those who knew him less well, or who placed the Press on a lower plane than he maintained for it, supposed that his vote and influence could be bought, not of course by money, but by professional favours. This delusion was entertained, and a consequent sense of grievance was cherished in the most exalted quarters. In 1857 Prince Albert was by royal patent

[1] See *Trevelyan*, pp. 291, 343, 417.
[2] *Dasent*, ii., 6.

created "Prince Consort," and he wrote to his friend and counsellor at Coburg announcing the fact. It was the settlement of a question which had long excited the Court and perplexed Ministers. The Prince was "not yet able to tell" Stockmar "how the step has been regarded by the public," but he said: "*The Times* had a *sneeringly approving* article yesterday, in which the news is announced, by way of return for its being the first to have the news communicated to itself!"[1] The Prince's note of exclamation expresses his wrath that the "sneer"—a very mild one—should not have been bought off by an early communication of the great event. The Prince was not alone in conceiving of the position of the Press in such matters in terms of an account. For so much exclusive information given, so much political support was supposed to be due. Delane respected his calling too much to stoop to any such bargaining. Once when the editor's incorrigible independence was exasperating the Government of the day, it was suggested by a politician who afterwards became eminent, and who never, I fear, thought very highly of the Press, though he contributed to it largely, that the way to bring Delane to terms was to cut him off for a while from all exclusive information.[2] But the suggestion was not adopted. The editor was too strong to be coerced; his paper was too easily first to be ignored.

This point brings us to another. The politician to whom I have just referred went on to say: "Its exclusive information derived from the Government

[1] *Martin*, iv., 65. The article (June 26) ended thus: "In spite of the poet, there is much in a name, and if there be increased homage rendered to the new title on the banks of the Spree or the Danube, the English people will be happy to sanction and adopt it."

[2] See Sir William Harcourt's letter to Lord Clarendon, 1853, in *Maxwell*, i., 366.

is nothing less than a letter of credit to the public authorizing it to speak on behalf of the Government." There was some truth in this, and the same point was made by Queen Victoria a few years later when *The Times*, as already related,[1] was taking a strongly anti-German line. "The Queen had often intended," she said, "to write to Lord Palmerston on the subject, and to ask him whether he would not be acting in the spirit of public duty if he endeavoured, as far at least as might be in his power, to point out to the managers of *The Times* (which derives some of its power from the belief abroad that it represents more or less the feelings of the Government) how great the injury is which it inflicts upon the best interests of this country."[2] *The Times* did undoubtedly derive some of its power from the source indicated by the Queen. Delane profited by the belief abroad that he represented the feelings of the Government, but he never parted with his independence in order to oblige the Government. Yet successive Governments continued to give him exclusive information which encouraged the belief. Lord Palmerston, in replying to Queen Victoria, sent an interesting memorandum upon the independent position of the British Press. "An erroneous notion prevails on the Continent," he said, "as to English newspapers. The newspapers on the Continent are all more or less under a certain degree of control, and the most prominent among them are the organs of political parties, or of leading public men; and it is not unnatural that Governments and parties on the Continent should think that English newspapers are published under similar

[1] See above, p. 127.
[2] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, iii., 588.

conditions." But such a view, Lord Palmerston went on to explain, is mistaken. In this country all thriving newspapers are private and "commercial undertakings." They are very critical, because criticism is popular, and therefore good business.[1] They are especially critical, Lord Palmerston thought, upon foreign events, persons, and Governments, "because such strictures are less likely to make enemies at home than violent attacks upon parties and persons in this country. Foreign Governments and parties ought, therefore, to look upon English newspapers in the true point of view, and not to be too sensitive as to attacks which these papers may contain."[2] There was much that was true in Lord Palmerston's presentation of the case; but it was not quite the whole of the truth, for, as I have said, the fact that *The Times* was often chosen by successive Governments as the vehicle for imparting official information necessarily fostered the Continental belief that the paper itself was at least semi-official. In later years the multiplication of good newspapers and the consequent establishment of Press agencies for the supply of news to all newspapers alike[3] have largely altered the conditions. In these days if the Government wish to publish some information they send it as a rule to the Press Association, or some similar agency, which

[1] See below, p. 282.

[2] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, iii., 590. In the "Life of the Prince Consort" (v., 401) an additional passage from Lord Palmerston's memorandum is given: "Foreign Governments do understand the true state of the case; but their subjects do not, and until their own Press is wholly free, they can scarcely be expected to do so. England, accustomed to her free Press, is *not* sensitive to the abuse of the Press of other countries. In this very year, 1861, she endured that of the American Press, virulent as it was, with entire equanimity."

[3] The oldest of such agencies, the Press Association, was founded at Manchester in 1865, and transferred to London in 1868.

then distributes it impartially to all its subscribing newspapers; but there are cases still in which a particular piece of official information is given privately to a particular newspaper, and in foreign affairs the selected newspaper continued, long after the days of Delane, to be *The Times*.

Delane, though (as I have said) he profited by the supposition (which indeed was often correct) that he represented in a peculiar degree the official and national view, pursued nevertheless a line of complete independence from Government control. There were occasions, it is true, upon which he refrained from a particular line of comment, or modified his tone, in deference to representations from Ministers based upon their view of the national interest. More frequently, however, Delane refused to accommodate the conduct of his paper to the wishes of the Government. The reader will remember how often in foregoing pages our record has told of the indignation of statesmen at Delane's treatment of foreign affairs, and of the editor's sturdy—and even, as some thought, arrogant—maintenance of the independence of the Press. Such disputes involve the question of the proper limits of independence in relation to national policy. This is a nice question, and it may be of interest to notice the high ground taken by Delane. There was a battle royal on the subject in 1852. *The Times* was persistent in attacks upon Louis Napoleon, and Delane had already received strong remonstrances in private from Lord Clarendon and Lord Granville. They did not move him. In the debate upon the Address (February 3, 1852) Lord Derby hotly denounced the criticisms of Louis Napoleon, and Lord Grey, on the Ministerial side, endorsed the

indictment. "If in these days," said Lord Derby, "the Press aspires to exercise the influence of statesmen, the Press should remember they are not free from the corresponding responsibilities of statesmen." In a couple of leading articles (February 6 and 7) Delane delivered a reasoned reply, admitting, or rather glorying in, the responsibilities of the Press, but denying that it is bound by the *same* limitations, the *same* duties, the *same* liabilities, as those of the Ministers of the Crown :—

"The purposes and duties of the two Powers are constantly separate, generally independent, sometimes diametrically opposite. The dignity and freedom of the Press are trammelled from the moment it accepts an ancillary position. To perform its duties with entire independence, and consequently with the utmost public advantage, the Press can enter into no close or binding alliance with the statesmen of the day, nor can it surrender its permanent interests to the convenience of the ephemeral power of any Government. The first duty of the Press is to obtain the earliest and most correct intelligence of the events of the time, and instantly by disclosing them to make them the common property of the nation. The Press lives by disclosures. Whatever passes into its keeping becomes a part of the knowledge and history of our times. It is daily and for ever appealing to the enlightened force of public opinion—anticipating if possible the march of events—standing upon the breach between the present and the future, and extending its survey to the horizon of the world. The duty of the Press is to speak; of the statesman to be silent. We are bound to tell the truth as we find it, without fear of consequences—to lend no convenient shelter to acts of injustice and oppression, but to consign them at once to the judgment of the world. . . . It may suit the purposes of statesmen to veil the Statue of Liberty. . . . Governments must treat other Governments with external respect, however black their origin or foul their deeds; but happily the Press is under no such trammels, and, while diplomatists are exchanging courtesies, can unmask the mean heart that beats beneath a star, or point out the bloodstains on the hand which grasps a sceptre. The duty of the journalist is the same as that of the historian

—to seek out truth, above all things, and to present to his readers, not such things as statecraft would wish them to know, but the truth as near as he can attain it. . . . Let those who will preach silence on crimes which they cannot deny and dare not even palliate; we have been trained in another school, and will not shirk from boldly declaring what we freely think, though it should be our disagreeable duty to tell Lord Derby that he condescends to be the tool of the party which he pretends to lead, and Lord Grey that he is the scourge of the party which he is permitted to govern."

A spirited defence! and that of a stout fighter ready to carry the war into the enemy's camp. In a private letter Delane put the case more shortly:—

"He [Lord Granville] has no necessary concern in the French people and its institutions, except as they directly affect England. If the old Reign of Terror were revived, and five hundred heads a day falling in the Place de la Concorde, it would be no business of his so long as the heads were those of Frenchmen; though he would then scarcely affect to blame us for expressing the indignation of all humanity. Except that our feelings are not shocked by the actual effusion of blood, the deportation to Cayenne is as cruel a measure as the decrees of the Revolutionary Tribunal, and we are as much bound, in the cause of justice and humanity, to exclaim against it. But though this is our business, and our duty too, he is under no such obligation; whatever he may feel as a private person, he, in his dealings with the French Government, is as much bound to suppress as we are to publish our opinions. We can neither change our respective courses."[1]

In fact, however, though *The Times* did not change its course, the attacks on Louis Napoleon were presently abated. Enough had been done for history and humanity, and it was time to give some weight to the expediency of international relations. A conflict of duties has confronted the Press in other connexions during the European war now raging; and a study of the manners in which it was resolved

[1] To Reeve: *Laughton*, i., 252.

may furnish an interesting chapter in some future history of British journalism.

Delane's work was done in less critical times; and though the affair of Louis Napoleon caused a battle royal between the statesmen and the editor, it was yet something of a sham fight. Lord Derby's parliamentary anger did not prevent him from communicating afterwards with Delane, whilst Lord Clarendon and Lord Granville continued as closely in touch with him as before. Nor was Lord Granville at all sorry that *The Times* had spoken out freely about the Prince-President's iniquities; it was on the question of degree that he differed. The fact is that the ambiguous position of *The Times* in regard to foreign affairs—really independent, yet abroad supposed to be official—not really official, yet sometimes amenable to inspiration—if it had some disadvantages from a ministerial point of view, yet had advantages as well. The line adopted by the paper could at pleasure be left to be taken as official, or be explained away in Lord Palmerston's manner. The point may be illustrated from instances in the present day. In the early stages of the German war, in the autumn of 1914, when the attitude of Turkey was still uncertain, an article appeared in *The Times* (August 29) cogently reasoned and judiciously worded, in which it was pointed out that she would run great risks by throwing in her lot with Germany and Austria against England, France, and Russia. It made representations such as might serve a useful purpose if taken as representing the views of the Allies. The article was not unacceptable, I imagine, to the Foreign Office. A little later (October 3) another article appeared, less judiciously worded, in which Italy and Roumania were exhorted,

and almost commanded, to abandon their neutrality and join the Allies. It was the kind of article which, however well intentioned, might be held capable, if taken as being in any degree official, of doing harm. The Foreign Office at any rate felt constrained to issue this announcement: "The views expressed in the article in *The Times* of October 3 are unauthorized and do not represent the attitude of his Majesty's Government." The editorial comment [1] of *The Times* upon the Foreign Office's disclaimer was somewhat in the spirit of Delane, though he (as I have said) was never confronted, in maintaining the independence of the Press, with a national emergency comparable to the present.

Next, Delane was independent of party ties, and this independence enhanced in various ways the importance of his opinions. The influence which he thus acquired is not the only kind to which able editors can aspire, but it was, I imagine, greater than any other editor has enjoyed. To have influence a paper must be read by influential people; to ensure being widely read it must excite curiosity. This is a point at which even the cleverest articles in a strictly party paper stand at some necessary disadvantage. A newspaper, though sworn to one side, may be much read on the other side as well, on account of the literary or logical ability of its political articles, or the studied reasonableness of its tone, or its semi-official

[1] "We fail to understand the above communication. The leading articles of *The Times* express its editorial opinions and are never 'authorized,' nor do they contain 'authorized' statements except when the 'authority' is indicated. *The Times* expresses views which its information leads it to believe to be accurate and necessary, though in view of the special circumstances arising from the war additional care is taken to ascertain in quarters best qualified to judge that the expression of its views will not endanger any national interest. The article in question provides no exception to this rule" (Sunday edition of *The Times*, October 4, 1914).

authority; yet, even if all these attractions be combined, a paper may lose some piquancy of appeal if every one knows that the editorial umpire is sure in the end to give his own side in. What made every one turn with alert curiosity to *The Times* in Delane's day was that nobody knew beforehand which side he would take on any new question. In one sense his paper was nearly always official—it was the most likely, that is, to contain official news; but Delane, as we have seen already, made no bargain that official news should be paid for by official views. He was not bound to swear by the opinions of any master; he was not pledged to any party. Being thus independent, he was generally critical, an attitude which, other things being equal, gives a great advantage to a newspaper. Practitioners in political journalism know how much easier it is to be effective in opposition than in support. To find reasons or excuses for a party in power may sometimes afford to the skilled craftsman the opportunity for subtlety; but for telling strokes opposition gives the better occasion. Criticism is easier, and it is also the more enjoyed. Lord Palmerston, who knew most things that are to be known about the Press (except that here and there a paper may have a soul), hit this point shrewdly in the little essay on British journalism which, as already mentioned, he sent to Queen Victoria in 1861:—

"The profit of the newspaper arises from the price paid for advertisements, but advertisements are sent by preference to the newspaper which has the greatest circulation; and that paper gets the widest circulation which is the most amusing, the most interesting, and the most instructive. A dull paper is soon left off. The proprietors and managers of *The Times* therefore go to great expense in sending correspondents to all

parts of the world where interesting events are taking place, and they employ a great many able and clever men to write articles upon all subjects which from time to time engage public attention; and as mankind take more pleasure in reading criticism and fault-finding than praise, because it is soothing to individual vanity and conceit to fancy that the reader has become wiser than those about whom he reads, so *The Times*, in order to maintain its circulation, criticises freely everybody and everything."[1]

Delane would not greatly have demurred to his friend's account of the matter. When Sir William Russell was preparing a lecture on the Crimean War Delane advised him to avoid giving offence to military heroes of the hour, but for the rest to be as critical as he liked:—

"The home Government is always fair game; and the man who will resent to the death the imputation that the man the Government has chosen is not that very rare animal, a general, will have no hesitation in accusing the Government itself of treachery and every other vice."[2]

Delane enjoyed the double advantage of being in one sense always in office, and in another always in opposition. He was nearly always in the confidence of the Ministers of the day. Yet he was so entirely independent that he was free, according to his own judgment of times, seasons and measures, to approve or disapprove of the proceedings of either party. As neither party is all-wise, as nearly every Ministry begins to die soon after its birth, he had abundant scope for the kind of criticism of which Lord Palmerston wrote. It may be noticed, further, that political conditions during the greater part of Delane's career were favourable to the influence of free criticism.

[1] *Queen Victoria's Letters*, iii., 590.
[2] *Atkins*, i., 266.

Party demarcations were less strictly ruled, party obligation was less severe, Cabinet control over the House of Commons was less absolute, than they have become in later times.[1]

The independence of *The Times* under Delane has exposed him to much adverse criticism. The paper has been represented as a weathercock, and Delane and his writers have been accused of "a shameless disregard of the claims of consistency and sincerity."[2] That was one of Cobden's railings against *The Times*. Bright's had more polish. "*The Times*," he once said in a speech, "says I repeat myself; *The Times* says I am guilty of what it calls tautology; *The Times* says I am always saying the same thing. What I complain of in *The Times* is that it *never* says the same thing."[3] An instance given by Bright is that in 1855 it urged the prosecution of the Crimean War, whereas in 1853 it had written "against the Turk." This collocation was held to indicate "treachery" in a guide of the people. Similarly Queen Victoria found a lack of principle in *The Times* because though it had often criticised the Prince Consort it sometimes praised him. Such judgments are confusions, in the mind of persons with fixed ideas, between change of opinion and lack of principle. It was very natural in the Queen to hold that her Prince was always and in all things a pattern of perfection. Cobden and Bright saw the case of Free Trade so clearly, and held to peace at almost any price so firmly, that they had no charitable patience with men who required, in the

[1] On the latter point Mr. Lawrence Lowell has some instructive remarks and tables in his "Government of England," i., 317.

[2] Cobden, as quoted in *Morley*, ii., 423.

[3] Trevelyan's "Bright," p. 250 *n*.

one instance, to be convinced by circumstances and who, in the other, thought that circumstances altered cases. Yet instability of opinion does not prove shiftiness of character, nor in political questions is it even a necessary sign of intellectual error or deficient judgment. Delane need not be tried by any standard more severe than is applicable to Peel or Gladstone. He often came to approve policies which he had previously condemned, but so did those statesmen. Cobden, as noted already, used to assert that *The Times* under Delane was always wrong. "You may take my word for it," he wrote to a friend, "you can never be in the path for success, in any great measure of policy, unless you are in opposition to that journal"; and again in a public letter, "There are three conditions only, requisite for the success of any great project of reform—namely, a good cause, persevering advocates, and the hostility of *The Times*." There are valid cases which support Cobden's view, but as a general statement it is shown by the record in previous chapters to be untrue. As for the charges that Delane "supported only to betray," [1] or attacked only to support, each political leader and each party in turn, the proper answer is confession and avoidance. The fact is true, but by way of avoidance it has to be remembered that no leader, that neither party, is always in the right or always wins the favour of the country as being in the right. There are electors who always vote the same party ticket, and these are the majority. There are others who vote sometimes on the one side, and sometimes on the other. These are a minority, but it is they—the balancing electors—who decide the fortunes of Ministries and direct the

[1] The phrase is John Bright's; see a letter of 1870 in *Trevelyan* p. 417.

policy of the country. *The Times* under Delane expressed or formed the views of the balancing electors, and therein was one secret of his influence. Lord Morley, in the chapter of his "Life of Cobden" which deals with Delane, pictures him as truckling to "unregenerate opinion." "*The Times* was Palmerstonian because the country was Palmerstonian, just as by-and-by it became Derbyite because the country seemed Derbyite." "The conductor of a newspaper is entirely at liberty to choose what constituency he will attract. It pleased *The Times* at that day to domesticate itself, it was said, among the aristocracy" —a policy which Lord Morley characterises as perhaps "very narrow and ignoble." On the personal relations of Delane, I have said something already (Chapter VII.) which may abate the severity of this judgment; but, on the more general side of the question, why should Lord Morley tacitly exclude what must at least be regarded as a possibility, namely, that Delane himself honestly shared the unregenerate views to which he is represented as ignobly pandering and himself was subject to the changes of opinion which the balancing electors recorded at the polls or the independent members expressed in the House? The more charitable is, I am convinced, the more correct opinion. But however that may be, Delane's political influence was in large measure due to his accuracy as a political meteorologist. Whether by instinct, or sympathy, or artifice, he nearly always knew which way the wind was blowing, in what direction the balancing electors were tending. During his editorship there were eight general elections. On all those occasions except one *The Times* correctly predicted the result and supported what proved to be

the winning side.[1] It was, then, Delane's independence, in the third of the senses indicated above (p. 270)—his freedom from rigid party bonds, enabling him to keep close to the governing public opinion of the time—that added greatly to the influence of his paper. The character of his mind conformed quite honestly, as I believe, to the character which he gave to *The Times*, but I do not doubt that he aimed at this particular kind of influence as a deliberate ideal. Influence and character do not always go with circulation and commercial success; but it is deserving of notice as at any rate a coincidence that after Delane the circulation of *The Times* began to decline. During the last decade of his editorship (1867—1877) the average daily circulation stood in round numbers at 61,000. In Delane's last year it was 61,713. In 1879 it was 57,991; in 1881, 54,935; in 1883 it had fallen to 46,378—a decline of 25 per cent. in six years. As the paper became more and more violently partisan its circulation declined further.[2] Delane deplored the hostile criticisms made upon the distinguished scholar who succeeded him; but it is recorded that in his retirement he feared that *The Times* was losing ground by tending to become too much of a Ministerial organ. The circulation afterwards rose, but it may be questioned whether *The Times* recovered, in its own country at least, the authority which it lost when it substituted partisanship for the independence of Delane.

[1] The exception was the General Election of 1874. *The Times* predicted a small majority for Mr. Gladstone and supported his side, on the whole, though not very strongly.

[2] These figures are taken from the records of its circulation printed in *The Times* on May 8, 1914, in connexion with the reduction of its price to a penny, which had been made on March 16, 1914.

An important question remains which, as the reader may have noticed, was left open in preceding discussions. Delane exercised great influence by the utterance of opinions; but did he form or only express public opinion? No more intricate question can arise in a study of journalism, and I must presently make some attempt to answer it; but I turn, first, to another subject. We have considered the secrets and character of Delane's influence; we now pass to its vehicles and methods. The subject is somewhat technical, but will not, I hope, be found uninteresting by those who read daily newspapers and mark changes in them. Nor will the discussion of Delane's vehicles be wholly foreign to the larger question which lies behind. He may have been an educator or only a reflecting medium, but at any rate he adopted the technique appropriate to the former *rôle*. The medium through which Delane wielded his influence was a journalistic instrument of which the force has in later days been somewhat blunted—the instrument of the leading article. *The Times* of Delane was indeed, as we have seen, strong in all departments, but it was into its leading articles, and especially into the one which came first, that the chief strength of the paper was thrown. This practice is so unlike that of most of our newspapers in the present day that the point is worth noticing in some detail. The importance of the first leader was not only in its focussing of public attention on this or that as *the* subject of the day, though that was one element in it; nor did the importance consist only in the expression of opinion, though particular care was taken to make the article forcible and pointed, and though many people no doubt took their opinions from

it. The article was made of further importance in another way—a way which may seem strange and benighted to practitioners in the newest journalism. The article was the place, and the only place, in which the best news was given. I have described in an earlier chapter the great excitement caused by the announcement in *The Times* that Peel had resolved to repeal the Corn Laws. That piece of news was, in the language of American journalism, a "scoop" or a "beat" of the first order. It caused a great sensation; but no piece of news was ever given in a less sensational way. It appeared as the first paragraph of the first leader and nowhere else in the paper. The announcement of the ultimatum before the Crimean War—an announcement which, as we have seen, created a great stir—was also made in the leading article only. So, again, in the case of the formation of a new Government, the appointments were generally set out first in the leading article. There was, as a rule, no display of such political news elsewhere; there were no head-lines. If a comparable case be taken from *The Times* of a recent date, the contrast between the old method and the new will be made apparent. In July, 1914, *The Times* obtained exclusive possession of the news that King George had convened a Conference at Buckingham Palace in the hope of obtaining a settlement of the Irish question by consent. The announcement caused excitement, not indeed so great as, but yet comparable to, that caused by the announcement about the Corn Laws in December, 1845. In the later year as in the earlier there was much speculation about the source of information, and much angry criticism by disappointed rivals. The earlier announcement made the

greater stir. But the later was made with the greater noise. There was of course a leading article on the subject, but the article was only comment. The announcement itself was made in a news column, with loud head-lines and in boldly displayed type. Delane would have stated the fact quietly at the beginning of a leading article. Whatever may be thought of the new method from other points of view, it must be admitted that the old method gave peculiar power to the leading article. To-day a reader may skip the leading article and yet be sure of not missing any vital piece of news. In *The Times* of Delane the leading article was the thing which no politician could afford to miss, for it might contain early news nowhere else obtainable. The reader had to go to the article of comment to find the news, and could not take the news without having to glance at the comment. Nor was this the only way in which the use of the leading article as a vehicle for conveying news added to the power of the article. What was stated by the formula "we understand" or "we believe" was often found to be a statement of accomplished facts; and thus what was often a mere expression of editorial opinion came to be invested, by power of association, with an air of high authority. The very economy of emphasis practised by Delane in the display of news enhanced its importance. The formula "we understand" often meant in reality "we know"; and because what the editor understood was seen to be verified by the event, what he thought or hoped or ordered was accepted also as authoritative. Thus in various subtle ways the opinion-forming power of the leading article obtained in *The Times* of Delane an almost pontifical influence.

Every element of strength was thrown, it will have been seen, into the "leader." It was the vehicle of exclusive information; in it were concentrated the varied knowledge of a large staff, the literary ability of the writers, the governing judgment of the editor. And there was another way—showing again a wide difference from the methods of many present newspapers—in which the prestige of the leading article was enhanced. It was the *only* vehicle of opinion. Delane constantly impressed upon his "special correspondents" that their business was simply to give facts; it was not for them to interpret the facts; *that* was the business of the leader-writers exclusively. In many modern newspapers a reader may find almost as many expressions of opinion as there are special articles. The veiled personality of the editorial "we" is swamped by a multitude of obtrusive persons, each giving his name and airing his individual opinion. Nothing more unlike *The Times* of Delane—in appearance, in spirit, in effect—can be conceived than a sheet of some popular papers during the German war. In them one found a short, and sometimes rather perfunctory, leading article, or in a single column two or three scrappy leaderettes. Then came a long article, signed by some popular writer—generally a novelist; often stamped with individuality, and always giving not the views of the paper, but those of the individual writer. On the next page there was the special correspondence, and the most conspicuous feature, next to the head-lines, was the names of the several correspondents, even the shortest message being signed by the writer. All this is the direct contrary of journalism as practised in the days of Delane. The mystery of the unknown has gone.

The power, the influence, the authority of the newspaper itself are sacrificed to the advertisement of its several contributors. Lord Morley, in a passage to which reference has already been made, seemed to think—he was writing in 1882—that as anonymity in journalism waned "a sense of responsibility" would wax. With all respect due to a master of the craft (and, as piety bids me add, to my own first editor), I must take leave to differ from his opinion. The corporate sense of responsibility, behind the veil of anonymity, was in the best days of Victorian journalism very strong. Every member of the staff of an important paper, especially if its editor were a chief who inspired confidence, had the *esprit de corps*, and felt the professional pride, that belong to members of a regiment. The writers worked not for the individual credit of each, but for the credit of the paper, which was in their minds something greater than the aggregate of themselves. They were not, it is true, individually and personally responsible, but they were responsible, each in his measure and sphere, for the honour of the institution which they served. All this was, I submit, at least as sobering and fortifying as anything in the newer system under which a newspaper may tend to become a vehicle for the expression of individual views, or a ladder for the promotion of individual ambitions. Upon the leader-writers the sense of corporate responsibility was particularly strong. "Don't wrap yourself in *Times* foolscap," said Thackeray once to a friend on the staff of that paper; "try work for yourself." To a man of literary genius the advice may have been good; but it was felt, in the days of Delane, to be no light thing to wield the thunders of Jove. It lent a great respon-

sibility to be speaking, not as a signed writer nor as one whose identity was generally known, but as the mouthpiece of an impersonal organ whose deliverance proceeded with the authority of accumulated traditions. Sir William Russell has left a charming account of his sensations in the early days of his leader-writing:—

"When I saw *The Times* laid out on the breakfast table, I experienced a curious feeling of *mauvaise honte*, mingled with curiosity, but it was soon dispelled by the satisfaction which the appearance of the leader in a prominent place caused me. I read very carefully, and detected in the garish light of day faults invisible at 2 a.m., but on the whole I was rather proud of my work and rather disappointed that no one talked about *The Times's* views of the Italian question at the club when I went up to town . . . There was a canon, not expressed but understood, that *The Times* leader-writers were to keep their *incognito*. I have often had the pleasure of hearing my friends discuss my handiwork, sometimes the pain of listening to very stringent criticism."

But the highest pleasure was commendation from the chief. "I congratulate you; your article has the real stuff and go of a leader, and you shall see it in the first place to-morrow. This from Delane!"[1] That from Delane, and the craftman's pleasure in a job well done, were the rewards for which many anonymous journalists worked. With more of self-esteem and less of genial humour than appear in Russell's diary Henry Reeve shows us something of another side of the responsibility which the Victorian leader-writers felt. "My articles," he says, "were the expression of a great system of foreign policy, such as I should have acted upon if I had been born to the position of a Minister. I enjoyed the power *The*

[1] *Atkins*, i., 374.

Times conferred of governing public opinion." [1] That was the point, and Mr. Reeve did not himself always fully appreciate it: it was *The Times* that conferred the power, and the power was the greater the more the personality of the writers was sunk in the corporate entity of the paper. No doubt the old system had the defects of its qualities. It conduced to a certain pomposity and pretence of omniscience; but on the other hand, as a competent writer on this subject has observed, "the grand manner can be more easily sustained where irrelevant individual characteristics are suppressed, and continuity can be better preserved in spite of necessary changes on the staff." [2] *The Times* itself affected to know no change. The pontificate was perpetual, and each writer caught the knack of speaking with authority. He put into his work the best of which he was capable; what he said depended for its force and acceptance not upon a name, but upon its own intrinsic weight. The leader-writers, and the editor under whom they were proud to serve, took themselves very seriously, and strove to acquit themselves as men responsible for high affairs. "If we make ourselves," said Burke, "too little for the sphere of our duty—if, on the contrary, we do not stretch and expand our minds to the compass of their object, be well assured that everything about us will dwindle by degrees, until at length our concerns are shrunk to the dimensions of our minds."

While limiting to the leading article the expression of opinions for which the paper was in any way respon-

[1] *Laughton*, i., 399. Mr. Reeve's further statement that his articles were seldom even suggested by the editor is hardly accurate.

[2] *Dibblee*, p. 103.

sible, *The Times* of Delane was scrupulously impartial in the publication of news. Each side, each subject, was given a fair field and no favour. There was no attempt—such as is sometimes made in newspapers to-day—to doctor the news by suppression, or to colour it by *ex parte* headings. Nor, again, was it contemplated by Delane that his readers would include persons so much in haste, or with powers of literary digestion so weak, as to require spoon-feeding. Delane would have been horrified at the waste of precious space involved both in sprawling head-lines and in the repetition of the same news two or three times in differently graduated doses. *The Times* of Delane was a paper for grown-up and seriously-minded men and women. In it they found the news of the world laid before them soberly and impartially, and elsewhere on the leader page the opinions which the editor invited them to form thereon. If any of my younger readers desire to know what *The Times* of Delane looked like, he will get the best idea by turning, among the morning papers of to-day, to some of the old-established provincial, Scottish, or Australian papers; and it is significant that these are among the modern morning dailies in which the leading article probably possesses most weight.

Such, then, were the vehicles and methods by which Delane sought to influence opinion. What, we next have to inquire, was the relation of his paper to that fluctuating and indeterminate body of ideas and feelings which is called "public opinion." "*The Times*," said Lord Clarendon in a letter already quoted, "forms, guides, or reflects—no matter which—the public opinion of England." [1] Which was it?

[1] See above, p. 37.

Lord Clarendon was writing of the influence of *The Times* in foreign quarters as the organ of English public opinion, and from his point of view the way in which the instrument worked was immaterial; but from other points of view the question is of some significance. Was *The Times* of Delane a mirror, a guide, or an initiator? The answer is that it was all three. First, *The Times* collected and *reflected* public opinion. "The chief interpreter of public opinion," says George Meredith of Mr. Tonans, "caught the way of the wind and headed the gale." It is said that with this intent *The Times* used to employ "a shrewd, idle clergyman, who made it his duty to loiter about in places of common resort and find out what people thought upon the principal subjects of the time; he was not to listen very much to extreme foolishness, and still less was he to hearken to clever people. His duty was to wait and wait until he observed that some common and obvious thought was repeated in many places and by numbers of men who had probably never seen one another. That one common thought was the prize he sought for, and he carried it home to his employers." Such is the legend enshrined with malicious art in Kinglake's well-known piece upon the "Great Newspaper Company." To take the edge off the malice, he made the shrewd, idle clergyman live a great many years ago; but the legend has an element of truth in the case even of *The Times* in the days of Delane. He was not idle; but he was shrewd, he mixed with many men, he collected many opinions. Even an editor who mixes less in the great world than did Delane has many opportunities of collecting common opinion. If he be industrious, he looks through a number of other newspapers pub-

lished in various parts of the country. He has local correspondents in many places. He receives a large letter-bag. His own staff is considerable and includes men and women who represent diverse interests and have connexions with different phases of life and society. The editorial "we" is thus often something more than an empty form; it may connote the resultant of accumulated reflections of opinion.

Such was certainly the case with *The Times* of Delane; but in the very act of reflecting public opinion he also, by the nature of the medium already described, of necessity *guided* the opinion. The views, to which the man in the street may perhaps have been inclined already, were presented in the leading articles with a logical force, a literary ability, and a range of knowledge greater than his own. The general conclusion, already formed, was confirmed, and a particular direction was often given to it, by the reasons which *The Times* supplied. "It is certain," says Novalis, "my conviction gains infinitely, the moment another soul will believe in it." How much greater is the gain when a reader learns that public opinion generally believes in it! "The report which the paper gave of the opinion formed by the public was," as Kinglake says, "so closely blended with arguments in support of that same opinion, that he who looked at the paper merely to know what other people thought was seized, as he read, by the cogency of the reasoning." But though *The Times* thus guided public opinion, the essence of its function was to be representative rather than autocratic. Delane did, indeed, sometimes take an unpopular side and withstand the gust—as, for instance, in the case, already recorded, of Kossuth. But more often he set

his sails to catch the popular breeze. There were occasions, I think, on which he felt a little ashamed of this trick. His reference to "the old Protestant horse," cited in a previous chapter, is a case in point. His jesting note had the result of ordering that hack back to the stable, and the action was characteristic. He more often moderated public prejudices than inflamed them, and rather aimed at the van than at the rearguard. He kept his ears close to the ground, and was quick to catch the first rustle of a forward breeze. He regarded *The Times*, as Lord John Russell angrily said, as an organ of government; and would have endorsed what Herbert Spencer lays down of government in general—that it should be a little, but only a little, in advance of public opinion.

The opportunist, whether in Parliament or in the Press, reflects and guides rather than *forms* public opinion. He may confirm and consolidate political opinion; he may bring it into coherence, and in that sense lead it, but he does not originate or transform. Kinglake likens Delane to a Tudor king; careful to mark the growth of a public sentiment or opinion, he went up to a cause that was waxing strong, offered to lead it, and so reigned. Much the same might be said of many statesmen. It is better, says the poet, "to sit at a water's birth than a sea of waves to win." "It was inevitable," says Cobden's biographer, "that a public man working for a transformation of political opinion should incur the hostility of the great newspaper of the day, for the simple reason that it has always been the avowed principle of the conductors of that newspaper to keep very close to the political opinion of the country in its unregenerate state." [1]

[1] Morley's "Cobden," ii., 420.

The pioneer's may be the better part; yet it takes all sorts to make a world; *The Times* had its useful place as well as the *Morning Star*. Certainly it cannot be claimed for Delane that he helped to start public opinion in the direction of abolishing the Corn Laws, or disestablishing the Irish Church, or introducing large measures of parliamentary reform; yet sooner than many others he rendered stout assistance to all those causes. He did not initiate the public opinion which produced great changes, but he helped to carry them. In another sense, however, and within a smaller range, Delane often formed, as well as guided and reflected, opinion. The editor of a daily paper is in one respect, as compared with the parliamentary politician, at a great disadvantage, or advantage: it is one or the other according to the editor's character and capacity. Some piece of news comes in suddenly, which makes "a new departure," as it is called—introducing a novel political problem, or involving, it may be, a fresh orientation of parties. As illustrations from modern politics I may cite such occasions as the first flying of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule "kite," or the crisis following the Parnell divorce case, or the eve of the South African war, or Mr. Chamberlain's first advocacy of Imperial Preference, or the antecedents of the great European war. The ordinary member of Parliament, even in some cases the political leader, is under no compulsion to declare himself on the instant; he can bide his time, taking counsel first with his friends, or waiting, it may be, to see which way the cat will jump. I recall an ingenuous book of political memoirs in which a Liberal member of Parliament describes his perturbation of mind at the Home Rule kite, and records his prudent

resolve "to make no declaration of policy." Very different is the case of the editor. The news comes in, perhaps, an hour or two only before some appreciation of it must be published; for in the days of Victorian journalism no self-respecting editor allowed his paper to appear without a leading article on the chief news of the morning or the evening. If the editor be timid, or time-serving, or unready, he will in such case consider himself caught at terrible disadvantage. To say nothing is to abdicate; but he knows not what to say, and perhaps says words of no meaning, or wraps himself in studied ambiguity, or sits in supposed safety on the fence. To an editor such as was Delane this kind of occasion comes as a signal advantage; it is an occasion which gives zest to his calling. He may or may not seize it well and wisely; but it makes a call upon all his resources, and gives an opportunity for the exercise of real power. For now he is in a position to cast, as it were, a prerogative vote; and, according to the measure of his influence, to form public opinion by the expression on the instant of a clear and decided judgment. I do not think that it can be maintained of Delane (as some of his panegyrists claim)—and I doubt whether it could be said of any editor, past or present—that he invariably rose to the full height of such testing occasions. He sometimes made mistakes, or struck an uncertain note; but more often he had something apposite and forcible to say. Thus, if he did not form public opinion in the sense of liberating new currents of thought, he did much, at the next stage, to direct the course of the channel and swell or restrain the force of the stream.

Thus, partly by forming, partly by guiding, and

partly by reflecting public opinion Delane in a remarkable degree spoke with and for the voice of England. In foreign countries what *The Times* said was taken as what the Government or the people of England thought. At home some men found in *The Times* reasons for what they thought or felt already, others saved themselves the trouble of thinking by taking their opinions from it, and others, again, turned to it in order to know what the greater number thought. The Press, as represented by *The Times* of Delane, was thus an organ for enabling public opinion to act upon government of at least equal importance with the platform and Parliament. The weight of the Press relatively to those other instruments was greater in the Victorian era than it is to-day. Platform oratory, though powerful, was then less persistent; and parliamentary sessions were less prolonged. Great in its influence upon public opinion is the force of iteration; the Press is never silent and never goes into retirement; and in the days of Delane *The Times* was easily the chief organ of the Press. Hence it was, as the historian says, in the passage prefixed to this chapter, that when practical men referred to "public opinion" they "simply spoke of *The Times*." Those behind the scenes, when they spoke of *The Times*, knew that it meant Delane.

He used the power which his position and his abilities gave him in honourable ways and for honourable ends. He betrayed no confidences. He did not debase the journalistic currency. He maintained a high literary standard. He treated every theme with a proper seriousness. He conducted a great newspaper for thirty-six years with unbroken success, reflecting various phases of dominant opinion, pledged

to no party or set of politicians, but exercising a moderating influence between them. This is not the only kind of ideal which an editor may pursue, but it is one which at least is neither unworthy nor narrow. He had his limitations, his prejudices, his weaknesses. His qualities and the defects of them were largely those of the governing classes of his day. *The Times* of Delane was a national institution; and Delane of *The Times* deserves a place among the notable Englishmen of the Victorian era.

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CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

1817. Birth of Delane.
„ Barnes appointed editor of *The Times*.
1818. Birth of John Walter (the Third).
1819. Birth of the Princess (afterwards Queen) Victoria.
1832. Reform Bill passed.
1834 (Nov.). Lord Melbourne dismissed by the King.
„ (Dec.). *Sir R. Peel became Prime Minister.*
1835. Peel resigned; *Melbourne became Prime Minister.*
1836. Delane matriculated at Oxford.
1837. Accession of Queen Victoria.
1839. Delane graduated at Oxford.
1840. Delane entered the service of *The Times*.
1841. Delane appointed editor of *The Times*.
„ General election. *Sir R. Peel became Prime Minister;* Lord Aberdeen, Foreign Secretary.
1842. Peel's Sliding Scale carried.
1845. Railway mania in England.
„ (Dec. 4). *The Times* announced Peel's intention to repeal the Corn Laws.
„ (Dec. 5). Peel resigned, and on Lord J. Russell's failure to form a Cabinet resumed office (Dec. 20).
1846. Repeal of the Corn Laws.
„ (June). Peel defeated; *Lord J. Russell became Prime Minister;* Palmerston, Foreign Secretary.
„ (June). Dispute with France over the Spanish marriages.
1847. Death of John Walter (the Second).
„ Factory Bill passed.
„ General Election: Rothschild returned for London.
„ Coercion Bill for Ireland.
1848. Revolution in France. Insurrections in Austria, Italy, etc.
1849. Affair of the Sicilian Arms.
1850 (June). Vote of confidence in Lord Palmerston's foreign policy.
„ (Sept.). Papal Bull issued creating Roman Catholic bishoprics in England.

1851 (Feb.). Government defeated. Lord J. Russell resigned, but, on Lord Stanley's failure to form a Ministry, returned to office.
„ (Oct.). Kossuth's visit to England.
„ (Dec.). *Coup d'état* by Louis Napoleon.
„ (Dec.). Dismissal of Lord Palmerston.
1852 (Feb.). Defeat of Lord J. Russell.
„ (Feb.). *Lord Derby, Prime Minister;* Disraeli, Chancellor of the Exchequer.
„ (July). Parliament dissolved.
„ (Dec.). Defeat of Disraeli's Budget.
„ (Dec.). *Coalition Ministry under Lord Aberdeen.*
1853 (Jan.). Partition of Turkey proposed by the Czar.
„ (April). Gladstone's first Budget.
„ (July). Newspaper advertisement duty abolished.
„ (July). Russian occupation of the Danubian principalities.
„ (July). Allied fleet ordered to Besika Bay.
„ (Oct.). Turkey declared war on Russia.
„ (Nov.). Turkish fleet destroyed at Sinope.
„ (Dec.). Resignation of Lord Palmerston.
„ English fleet ordered to the Black Sea.
„ (Dec.). Lord Palmerston resumed office.
1854 (Feb. 27). British ultimatum to Russia.
„ (March). British fleet under Sir C. Napier sent to the Baltic.
„ (May). Unsuccessful siege of Silistria by the Russians.
„ (June). British and French armies land at Varna.
„ (June 28). Invasion of the Crimea ordered.
„ (Aug.—Oct.). Delane's visit to the seat of war.
„ (Sept. 20). Battle of the Alma.
„ (Oct. 17). Siege of Sebastopol began.
„ (Oct. 25). Battle of Balaklava.
„ (Nov. 5). Battle of Inkerman.
1855 (Jan.). Defeat of Lord Aberdeen's Government.
„ (Jan.). *Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister.*
„ (March). Vienna Conference.
„ (June). Report of the Roebuck Committee.
„ (June). Newspaper stamp duty abolished; price of *The Times* reduced to 4*d.*
„ (Sept. 8). Capture of Sebastopol.
„ (Sept.). *Daily Telegraph* issued at 1*d.*
1856 (Jan.). Acceptance of the Four Points of Vienna.
„ (March). Treaty of Paris.

1857 (Sept.—Nov.). Delane's visit to Canada and the United States.
1857 (March). Palmerston defeated on the China question.
„ (March). General election: majority for Palmerston.
„ Indian Mutiny.
„ (Sept.). Fall of Delhi.
1858. Orsini attempted to assassinate the Emperor of the French.
„ (Feb. 20). Lord Palmerston defeated on the Conspiracy to Murder Bill.
„ *Lord Derby, Prime Minister;* Disraeli, Chancellor of the Exchequer.
„ (June). Government of India Bill passed.
„ (July). Admission of Jews to Parliament.
1859 (March). Defeat of Disraeli's Reform Bill.
„ (March). General election.
„ (March). Failure of Lord Granville to form a Government.
„ (June). *Lord Palmerston, Prime Minister;* Lord J. Russell, Foreign Secretary.
„ (April). France and Sardinia at war with Austria.
„ (June 4). Battle of Magenta.
„ (June 24). Solferino.
„ (July). Treaty of Villafranca.
„ Delane's visit to Italy.
1860 (Jan.). Commercial treaty between England and France.
„ (May). Attack upon Delane in the House of Commons.
1861 (Jan.). Accession of William, King of Prussia.
„ American Secession: formation of the Confederate States.
„ (May). Paper duty abolished; price of *The Times* reduced to 3*d.*
„ (July). Illness of Delane: offer of a post by Palmerston.
„ (Nov.). The *Trent* affair; danger of war between England and America.
„ (Dec.). Death of the Prince Consort.
1862 (July). The *Alabama* left the Mersey.
1863 (March). Marriage of the Prince of Wales.
„ (July). Lord Palmerston's speech on the Danish question.
„ (Nov.). Sir John Lawrence appointed Viceroy of India.
„ (Dec.). Controversy between Cobden and Delane.
1864 (April). Statement by Queen Victoria in *The Times.*
„ (June 25). British Cabinet decided for non-intervention between Prussia and Denmark.
1865 (April). Death of Cobden.

1865 (July). General election; majority for Lord Palmerston.
„ (Oct.). Death of Palmerston; *Lord Russell, Prime Minister.*
1866 (Feb.). The Queen opened Parliament.
„ (Feb.). Habeas Corpus Act suspended in Ireland.
„ (June). Reform Bill defeated.
„ (June). *Lord Derby, Prime Minister*; Disraeli, Chancellor of the Exchequer.
„ (June—July). Austro-Prussian War.
1867 (July). Disraeli's Reform Bill passed.
„ (Sept.). Rescue of the Fenian prisoners at Manchester.
„ (Dec.). Clerkenwell explosion.
1868 (Feb.). Lord Derby resigned; *Disraeli, Prime Minister.*
„ (April). Gladstone's Irish Disestablishment resolution carried.
„ (Nov.). General election.
„ (Dec.). *Gladstone, Prime Minister.*
1869. Irish Disestablishment carried.
1870 (Feb.). Irish Land Act.
„ (Feb.). Elementary Education Act.
„ (July). War declared by France against Prussia.
„ (July 25). Projet de Traité (1866) for the Violation of Belgium published in *The Times.*
„ (Aug.). Treaty of Great Britain with France, and with Prussia, to secure the neutrality of Belgium.
„ (Sept. 2). Sedan.
„ (Sept. 2). Proclamation of the French Republic.
„ (Oct.). Russian circular abrogating the Black Sea clauses of the Treaty of Paris.
1871 (Feb.). Ballot Bill rejected by the Lords.
„ (April). Lowe's proposed tax on matches withdrawn.
„ (May). Treaty of Washington, submitting the *Alabama* claims to arbitration.
„ Abolition of purchase in the Army.
1872. Ballot Bill passed.
„ Collier and Ewelme "scandals."
„ Award of Geneva tribunal on *Alabama* claims.
1873 (March). Government defeated on Irish University Bill; Gladstone resigned, but, on Disraeli's refusal to form a Government, resumed office.
1874 (Feb.). General election.
„ (Feb.). *Disraeli, Prime Minister.*
1875 (Jan.). Gladstone retired from leadership of the Liberal party.

1875 (May 6). *The Times* published report of Germany's intention to attack France.
„ (July). Insurrection in Herzegovina.
„ (Nov.). Purchase of Suez Canal shares by British Government.
1876. Illness of Delane.
„ Additional Titles Bill (Queen proclaimed Empress of India, Jan. 1, 1877).
„ (May). Insurrection in Bulgaria : Turkish atrocities.
„ England refused to accede to Berlin Note, urging Turkish reforms.
„ British fleet sent to Besika Bay.
„ (Aug.). Disraeli became Earl of Beaconsfield.
„ (Sept.). Gladstone's Bulgarian pamphlet published.
„ Delane's holiday in Scotland ; hurried return to London.
1877. Proposals of the Constantinople Conference rejected by Turkey.
„ (April). Russo-Turkish war.
„ (Nov.). Delane resigned editorship ; succeeded by T. Chenery.
1879 (Nov.). Death of Delane.

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